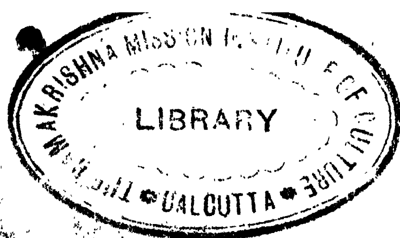
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ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES

INDIA

By

ANNIE BESANT

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Publishers' Preface

IN addition to the large number of volumes which stand in the name of Annie Besant in the catalogue of the British Museum, there is a great quantity of literature, for which she is responsible, that has appeared in more fugitive form as articles, pamphlets and published lectures, issued not only in Great Britain but in America, India and Australia. Much of this work is of great interest, but is quite out of reach of the general reader, as it is no longer in print, and inquiries for many such items have frequently to be answered in the negative. Under these circumstances the T.P.S. decided to issue an edition of Mrs Besant's collected writings under the title ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES. It was originally intended to arrange the matter in chronological order, commencing with the writer's first introduction to Theosophy as reviewer of Mme. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*, but several considerations determined the abandonment of this plan in favour of the scheme now adopted, which is the classification of subject-matter, independent of

chronological order. The Publishers feel sure that this arrangement will especially commend itself to students who desire to know what the Author has written on various important aspects of Theosophy in its several ramifications, and for all purposes of study and reference the plan chosen should more effectively serve. The dates and sources of articles are given in nearly all cases, and they are printed without any revision beyond the correction of obvious typographical errors.

The importance and interest of such a collection of essays, both as supplementing treatment of many of the topics in larger works and as affording expression of the Author's views on many subjects not otherwise dealt with, will be obvious, and it only remains to express the Publishers' hope that the convenience and moderate cost of the series may ensure its thorough circulation among the wide range of Mrs Besant's readers.

T.P.S.

London, May 1913.

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India's Mission among Nations

An Article contributed to "The National Educator"

EVERY person, every race, every nation, has its own particular keynote which it brings to the general chord of life and of humanity. Life is not a monotone but a many-stringed harmony, and to this harmony is contributed a distinctive note by each people that becomes a marked nationality. Thus Rome struck the note of civic greatness, devotion to the State as the ideal of the citizen, conquest for the glory of the State as the national duty ; Greece struck the note of intellectual greatness, enriching the art and the literature of the world with priceless treasures, and impressing even on her conquerors the stamp of her intellectual royalty. And India, rising high above them both, struck the note of spiritual greatness, of pure devotion to a spiritual ideal, of worship that asked only to become what it adored, of the gathering of spiritual knowledge. The three nations may stand as

types of humanity physical, humanity psychical, humanity spiritual, and while the two that represented the transitory body and the transitory mind have perished, leaving only their history, the one that represented and represents the immortal spirit remains; for, as Shrî Krishna says, the spirit is "unborn, constant, eternal and ancient, nor does it perish in the perishing body." India's body may perish as a body politic, but her eternal spirit remains, the spirit that has made Âryâvarta the cradle of religions, and her scriptures the fountain-head of all the scriptures of later faiths.

This spirituality of India has, then, been her contribution to the world's progress, and it has manifested itself in the dual aspect of wisdom and of devotion, Jnana and Bhakti. Thus she has wedded philosophy and religion and shown them both as aspects of spirituality, the noblest religion enshrined in the sublimest philosophy. Not without significance is it that in the great temple at Madura, the worshipper must stop and pay homage to Genesha ere he can pass onward to the shrine of Shiva, for Mahadeva, the great God, must be offered wisdom as well as love by His devotee, if the devotee would pass into the innermost recess and pay his homage to the

lotus-feet of Maha-yogi, the source of wisdom as of love.

And it is the perpetual affirmation of spirituality as the highest good that is India's mission to the world. As her past glory resulted from her spiritual knowledge and devotion, so must her future be based on the revival and reproclamation of the same. Her genius is for religion and not for politics, and her most gifted children are needed as spiritual teachers, not as competing candidates in the political arena. Let lesser nations and lesser men fight for conquest, for place and for power; these gimcracks are toys for children, and the children should be left to quarrel over them. India is the one country in the world in which it is still easy to be religious, in which the atmosphere of the land and the psychic currents are not yet wholly penetrated with materiality. If religion perish here, it will perish everywhere, and in India's hand is laid the sacred charge of keeping alight the torch of spirit amid the fogs and storms of increasing materialism. If that torch drops from her hands, its flame will be trampled out by the feet of hurrying multitudes, eager for worldly good, and India, bereft of spirituality, will have no future, but will pass on into the darkness, as Greece and Rome have passed.

The Âryan Type

An Article contributed to the "Ârya Bala Bodhini," 1895

Free from desire, his thoughts controlled by the SELF, having abandoned all attachment, performing action by the body alone, he doth not commit sin.—*Bhagavad Gîtâ*, iv. 21.

Place thy Manas on Me, be My devotee, sacrifice to Me, prostrate thyself before Me, thou shalt come even to Me. I pledge thee My troth; thou art dear to Me.—*Bhagavad Gîtâ*, xviii. 65.

CHARACTER lies at the root of outward conduct as well as at the root of inner aspirations, and the nations of the world have each their characters, the groundwork of the national type. These types, taken together, form the Humanity of the age, and constitute its various elements, and in judging the outer social form of any people, it is necessary to understand it as being an expression of national character, slowly moulded from within. Changes may be made which are consonant with the national character, and such grafts will grow and will affect the parent stock to some extent, but grafts of too alien a type will only perish.

The primary Âryan type was of a distinctly

marked character, and the feeble remnants that remain of that glorious type bear witness even yet to something of its beauty and its grace. It was a type pre-eminently spiritual, and the social polity that was its natural expression was moulded to give effect to spiritual ideas and to subordinate the lower nature to the higher, so that the nation might be a school of Souls, and the growth and the development of the Soul might be on every hand aided and encouraged. From this past it has resulted in the present that India, even in her present low state, despite the loss of spiritual life and the almost extinction of spiritual fire, yet remains the one country in the world where to put the Soul first, high above all material interests, is not regarded as a madness; the one country where spirituality still hovers in the very atmosphere, and where external surroundings help the Soul to rise instead of fettering it to earth.

But apart from its lofty spirituality, there is another aspect of the Âryan life which at the present time is of pressing importance. The Âryan type was one of unbending rectitude, of high morality, and those who would fain see Âryan spirituality again lift its head in the future, will do well to turn their

attention now to Âryan virtues, and to try and revive these in the life of the householder.

Out of the Spirituality grew reverence to parents, teachers, and elders. Reverence to the Gods translated itself in the family and social life into reverence for the parents who gave and nourished the physical life; for the teacher who gave and nourished the inner life—the second birth; for the aged, whose ripe wisdom served as guide and who handed on the ancient traditions. The boy was trained to be reverent, and ill-prognostic is it for the future when Indian youths lose the noble reverence of their ancestors and copy the flippant and silly uppishness of Western lads.

From reverence sprang courtesy, respecting others and self-respecting; the gracious courtesy which has stamped itself on the bearing of all classes, and even yet serves as a pattern of the manners that "are not idle," and that make the wheels of life run smoothly. Then came hospitality, the guest to be honoured as a god, hospitality free-handed and generous-minded, a duty ungrudgingly done. And its sister, charity, so that none might starve while others had enough; not yielded as a legal dole, but

given gladly, for the householder was the steward of the nation and none of the nation's children must go unfed. Reverence, courtesy, hospitality, charity, these were the social virtues of the Âryan householder that rendered him so gracious a type.

But these would not have availed to build the Âryan character, lovely as they are, had there not been laid as a foundation the bed-rock of Truth. Never might Âryan utter a lie; never might Âryan lips be stained with falsehood. Rigid fidelity to the pledged word, undeviating accuracy, these were taught by sacred precept, by lofty example, and this supreme virtue of Truth—without which all else must wither and perish—so wrought itself into the life of the nation that even now some Indian methods remind us of a time when an Âryan's word was his bond. Alas! that it cannot so be said to-day of Âryâvarta's degenerate sons, and that in some parts of India untruthfulness seems likely to become as characteristic as truthfulness once was. Would that every Âryan boy would make a vow in his heart to keep truth unstained, for he would by keeping truth do more to serve the nation than if he shone out as a brilliant light in the scholastic, legal, or political worlds.

Courage walks hand in hand with truth, and fearlessness was a distinguishing characteristic of the Âryan type. Fearlessness, which has tenderness for its other aspect, for only those who hurt none need fear none. Pain inflicted is a prophecy of future pain to be endured, for the Great Law swings unerringly, and to every act of wrong brings its meed of pain. Therefore is harmlessness the highest Dharma, and therefore read we of "the fearless Brâhman."

If India is again to hold up her head among nations, India's younger children must begin to lay the foundation in their own lives of the Âryan type of character. The virtues that I have mentioned were its most pronounced attributes, and the revival of these among the Âryan youth would presage the rebuilding of the nation. "Character makes destiny," and Indian destiny depends on Indian character. Here is work for the young whose hearts burn with love for the motherland, for on the altar of pure morality alone can fall the fire from Heaven which changes the fuel of aspiration into spiritual flame.

India, her Past and her Future

A Lecture delivered on board the "Kaisar-i-Hind," in the Indian Ocean, Monday, 6th November 1893, and published in "Lucifer," 1894

NEVER, I think, since I began to lecture many years ago, have I felt, in standing on a platform, more of difficulty than I feel to-night — difficulty, because I doubt how far I can win your interest, and, still more, I doubt how far I can win your sympathy. For India, as you look at it and as I look at it, has a very distinctly dual aspect. Your India and mine are probably very divergent. You know her as she is to-day after eight centuries of conquest and degradation. You know her, many of you, by taking part in the foreign government by which she is subjugated, and therefore you are very largely shut out from the real thought and the real life of the people. Whereas to me she is in very truth the Holy Land, the land whose great philosophy has been the source of all the philosophies of the Western world, the land whose great religion

has been the origin of all religions, the mother of spirituality, the cradle of civilisation. When I think of India, I think of her in the greatness of her past, not in the degradation of her present. For to-day but few of her children know anything of her great philosophy. To the mass of her people her mighty religion is veiled, becoming to the ignorant many a superstition, to the cultivated few but a poetical allegory. No longer the very life of the people, it is a form rather than a spirit. And so India fallen is the India of the present, while the India to which I would win your thoughts to-night is India unfallen, India as she was in her past, as she shall be in her future—mother once more in days to come, as in the days behind us, of art and of knowledge, mother of spiritual life and of true religion. That is the India I know; that is the India which has given to us the literature that I am going to say something of to-night; the India whose polity was built by King-Initiates, whose religion was moulded by divine men; the India which even so late as five thousand years ago felt her fields trodden by the feet of Shrî Krishna, which even twenty-four centuries ago heard her cities echoing with the sublime morality of the Buddha; the India which later, when her

great wars were over, had her poets who in the *Mahâbhârata* and the *Râmâyana* gave epic poetry to the world greater than that of Greece; dramatists who in later times still left treasures of beauty that the learned in the West are just beginning to appreciate. That is the India of which I have to speak—the India which, as I said, is to me the Holy Land. For those who, though born for this life in a Western land and clad in a Western body, can yet look back to earlier incarnations in which they drank the milk of spiritual wisdom from the breast of their true mother—they must feel ever the magic of her immemorial past, must dwell ever under the spell of her deathless fascination; for they are bound to India by all the sacred memories of their past; and with her, too, are bound up all the radiant hopes of their future, a future which they know they will share with her who is their true mother in the soul-life.

Though that may seem to many of you an extravagant view of India, still, to some who by no means share my faith in her philosophy and in her religion there has been a great fascination in Indian thought. Take the testimony of Max Müller given not long ago in one of his lectures in Glasgow or Edinburgh

(I forget which), in which he said that India with her civilisation was unique, as was her literature, in the history of the world, and the uniqueness lay in this—I am only roughly quoting what he said—that there once, and only once, you had a whole nation bent on the search for spiritual truth ; that there from one end of the land to the other the people sought and honoured spiritual wisdom ; so that the man who made any great discovery in truth had the highest title to honour, and kings would leave their thrones to visit the mud hut of some ascetic, because he had found out some truth about the soul, and was willing to teach it to whoever should come as a worthy pupil. Even there you see how something of what I have called the deathless fascination of India has been felt. Even Western orientalists also admit the uniqueness of her power and the uniqueness of her position in the world.

The India to which this thought really applies is the region which lies between the Himâlayas and the Vindhya Mountains, and between the eastern and western oceans. I give these as the limits laid down by Manu as those of the true Âryâvarta, the land of the Âryas, or Âryans. That, then, the north and the north-west, is what we may call the

religious and heroic India. There was settled the great race called the Âryan or the noble. If you want their type you may find it almost pure, in fact quite pure in a few cases, in some of the great Brâhman families of India, the noblest physical, mental and spiritual type which the earth has produced. This race, settled in that land, had for its teachers men who in past ages had finished their spiritual evolution, and who came to the infant race as its instructors in civilisation, came as the inspirers of its earliest literature, as the builders of its religion, and so moulded this people dwelling in the great plain of the Ganges, in this ever sacred land. From them came the mighty literature of which only a few fragments remain to-day; for the Vedas of that time and the Upanishads of that time are not the Vedas and the Upanishads that we have to-day. Noble as these are, they are but the fragments of the ancient literature, fragments left for the Indian people when they were entering on their dark age as being as much of spiritual truth as they were able to understand, while the others were withdrawn, to be kept for better times, for a more spiritual race. And then there were built up in this north and north-western part of what we now call India, a polity, a religion, a social life, a

general national condition of which the results were that unique civilisation of which Max Müller spoke. Its uniqueness consisted in the fact that it was all framed for a spiritual purpose, planned to assist spiritual evolution. The state was framed to a spiritual end; the family was built on a spiritual basis, the whole daily life was moulded to conduce to spiritual progress. So that even to-day it is easy in India to be religious at least on the outside, and the Hindû has ready to his hand the forms in which spiritual life may show itself; once more to quote Max Müller, he eats religion, drinks religion, sleeps religion, and breathes religion—a statement which is perfectly true, as you may see for yourselves, if you once get hold of the meaning of his religious ceremonies and mark the way in which those ceremonies are woven into his daily life.

The polity was the polity of caste—not of caste as you have it to-day in endless subdivisions, but of the four great castes into which, after all, if you think of it, all human forms of life must throw themselves. There were first the Brâhmans, the spiritual caste, the teachers of the young, the teachers of the people in the spiritual life, the students, the priests, the literary class—the class, that is, that includes the great intellectual professions

as well as the spiritual order, and consists of those who are naturally, by their intellectual and spiritual qualities, fitted to be the guides and teachers of the people. Then after them the Kshattriyas, the warrior caste, the royal and ruler class, the class that administered justice, that saw to the administration of the state, that defended it from internal disturbance as well as against foreign aggression. Then the Vaishyas, the merchant caste, that included all the commercial and trading classes and the agriculturists. And lastly, the Shûdras, or the serving caste. Those four castes are those which were originally instituted, and those which still remain, though masked by the innumerable sub-castes. They have given stability to Indian life; they have preserved her civilisation despite all kinds of conquest and of degradation. And if India has not disappeared as Assyria, as Egypt, as Chaldæa have disappeared—all of them with civilisations younger than her own—it is largely because of the stability given to her national existence by this system founded on natural divisions and with the stability of all natural things. And, mind you, the Indian standpoint from which caste is seen is very different from the standpoint that you may take in the West. Looking at this life as

the one life which a man has, it may seem to you hard that he should be born into a caste in which he remains all his life with but rare exceptions. But where people know that they are incarnated time after time, that the soul has to be trained in every department of life, then it seems helpful as well as natural that these four castes should exist, as the four great schools of the evolving soul, and that the Brâhman caste, pure in its blood, developing the most delicate organism, the subtlest brain, the most perfect mental mechanism, should be inhabited by the most advanced souls. And so in gradation with the other castes in the land.

The social life was similarly organised, always for a spiritual end. Take the institution of marriage as you find it in the early Indian books and amongst the early Âryan people. You find there side by side husband and wife, united in all the greatest things of life: the man the priest of his household, the wife the priestess without whom the daily sacrifices could not be performed, and therefore without whom the duties of the household could not be carried on; for the sacred household fire was only kindled by bride and bridegroom, and without this there was no "household." Husband and wife not only

married in life, but through death to the world beyond. According to Manu:

> Let mutual fidelity continue until death; this may be considered as the summary of the highest law for husband and wife;

for

> The husband receives his wife from the gods [he does not wed her] according to his own will.[1]

In such households grew up the heroic women who stand out for all time from Sanskrit literature—women great not only in the home but also in spiritual knowledge; such as Maitreyî, who "was fond of discussing the nature of Brâhma." [2] Again, in an assembly of Brâhmans you may read how Gârgî, a woman, got up and put questions to Yâjnavalkya which that learned teacher answered with full care and respect.[3] What Hindû can there be who does not feel his heart swell with pride when he thinks of those women, or of women like Sitâ, Sâvitrî and Sakundalâ? And what Hindû does not feel his heart shrink with pain when he contrasts those heroic figures with the women of to-day, sweet and

[1] *Manu*, ix. 101 and 95.
[2] *Brihad Âranyaka Upanishad*, v. iv. 1.
[3] *Ibid.*, III. vi. and viii.

pure and devoted as they are by the million, but still half-children, encaged in the prison of the Zenana and the still worse prison of the ignorance in which they dwell? Then take not only this its polity and its social life, but also its religious ceremonies; every act of life a religious service; the very food that was cooked, cooked ever as an offering to the Gods, and only secondarily as food for man;[1] hence very largely, let me say in passing, the abstemiousness of the Hindû nation, all the life of which was to be founded on a spiritual ideal, and not on that of material luxury.

Then, five thousand years ago, came the beginning of the end, the opening of the Kali Yuga, the dark age, the time at which Shrî Krishna appeared, the last of the great incarnations of Vishnu. Then coming on from that time downwards you have the time I alluded to of the great poets, those who wrote the *Mahâbhârata* and the *Râmâyana*, and so on. Then you have the coming of the Buddha and the founding of exoteric Buddhism, the teaching of a religion which, while it has a metaphysical and philosophical side, is, looked at in its exoteric aspect, to a very great extent materialistic, and in which, as a matter of fact, it was hoped to preserve

[1] *Bhagavad Gîtâ*, III. 12, 13.

at least morality, through the Kali Yuga, if spirituality could scarcely be kept alive. So down these ages of the descending cycle lower and lower the people sank, until at last the spiritual life has well-nigh disappeared. The Brâhman caste, no longer the custodians of knowledge for the teaching of the people, became its jailers rather than its stewards, using it for their own glory and not for the feeding of the people with spiritual food. Then century after century down to the Christian era, with still some exquisite poets, and still downwards after it, becoming more and more silent, until the twelfth, when the Mohammedan invasion swept over the land that had forfeited her birthright, and stifled, as it were, the last breathings of her past. Since then India has had no history. Since then India has been sleeping. Since then she has taken on many and many of the customs of her conquerors, and lately the veneer of a Western and materialistic civilisation has done even more harm to her people than much of the Mohammedan conquest did, for it has touched what was left of the inner as well as the outer life. Sleeping she is, and sleeping she will remain, until she turns back to that which inspired the literature of her past, to the philosophy and the religion of her greater

days. Those only have in them the hope of her future, as they have in them the essence of her past. That is the hope for India that still burns hidden in some few faithful hearts, that the hope of the reawakening of India for which some still work and pray.

Turning to what India has given to the world, we find that the literature that was left as I have described at the beginning of the Kali Yuga, is the literature that contains the ideas on which was based all the great, non-materialistic philosophy of Greece; on these ideas Plato—and Emerson said that all the greatest thinkers of the world since his time were Plato's men—founded all his teaching; these, after giving philosophy to the West through Greece, were revived once more, in their Pythagorean form especially, in the Middle Ages, by Giordano Bruno, who sounded the note which awoke Europe from its fifteen centuries of slumber and made modern life and modern science a possibility. Then onward from the time of Bruno to our own day you find them constantly reappearing, until in the nineteenth century, in men like Schopenhauer, some of the thoughts of the Upanishads are distinctly formulated—Schopenhauer, who found in these works his noblest inspiration, and who

brought into the life of German philosophy the ever-young philosophy of the East.

And it is to this that I now propose to turn. With this rough sketch of the fashion in which India was built, in which India lived, in which India fell, I come to the literature which is still her claim to the world's consideration, literature written in the most perfect of languages and enshrining the sublimest of thoughts.

First the Veda, a word which simply means knowledge, a word which covers that which to us to-day is the most ancient literature of India, threefold in its divisions however looked at; it is threefold as Rik, Yajur and Sâma, but it is from another standpoint that I desire to put it to you. The Veda, thus looked at, consists first of what are called Mantra or songs, hymns to the Gods, hymns used in religious ceremonies, hymns which are known by heart to the Brâhmans as officiating priests, and used whether in the domestic or the public ceremonies in which the Gods are worshipped. Then secondly the Brâhmanas, which contain the ceremonies and rites of the religion, not so interesting save to those who under the symbolism can reach the hidden truths. And, most important to us, thirdly, the Upanishads—the

esoteric knowledge of the East in so far as that inner teaching was committed to writing at all—which have raised so much enthusiasm in the Western world because of their deep philosophy; books that must always be books for the few, which can never become popular amongst the many, until the race is far more evolved than it is at present. The existence of these Upanishads—of which, as you may read in one of them, it is said that Brâhma "is concealed in the Upanishads that are concealed in the Vedas"[1]—made necessary that Indian institution of the Guru, which is so little understood, and which has become, alas! so much of a form instead of a reality. The Guru, in the old sense of the word, was the spiritual teacher who knew the inner meaning of the scriptures, that which was never committed to writing at all, which was simply given face to face, mouth to mouth, as it was called, handed down from Guru to Chelâ or disciple, the disciple in his turn becoming a Guru and handing on to other disciples the sacred truth that he had been taught. The Guru still exists in modern India, but simply as an ordinary religious teacher, to whom the lad is sent for so many years of his life to learn the Vedas and the

[1] *Shvetâshvatara*, v. 6.

Upanishads. They have lost the esoteric teaching so far as the majority of them are concerned; a few, indeed, preserve it still, but they are "hard to find."

This division of exoteric and esoteric has had a great deal of criticism thrown upon it in the West. It is said that truth should be sown broadcast, and that there ought not to be anything which is kept back. But is not that, after all, folly? As a dry matter of fact, you cannot give to a person that which he cannot take, which he is unable to understand or to assimilate. It has been the great fault of the popular religion of the West that it has divorced itself so much from philosophy and from science; and the result is that educated people are slipping away from it just because it does not dominate their intellect as well as satisfy their heart. It is all very well to say that a religion should be such that the poorest of the people can grasp it. But that which is truth for the uneducated ploughman is not truth for the educated philosopher. And it is well that we should understand that the old division is wise enough, that it is well to have a philosophy of religion as well as an ethic of religion that a child is able to grasp. The ethical religion will be the guide of the many; the philosophical will be the priceless

treasure of the few; but the philosophy will be the heart of the religion, and will make it impregnable against all intellectual assaults. This, then, is the part played by the Upanishads in the religious history of India. The sacred books like the Purânas are for the multitude, and are often full of stories of exquisite moral beauty, useful as exemplifying heroic virtues and for training the people to admire a high standard of morality. But the philosophy is that of the Upanishads, and it is there that we must seek for the great value of India to the world. The Guru was not only to fully teach the philosophy; it was also his duty to show the student how he might attain to the knowledge of the Supreme by the use of certain means. This was Yoga—which means union,—the method whereby the esoteric truth was rendered practically useful and developed the spiritual nature. It was not sufficient to appeal to the intellect; it was not sufficient that the mind should be instructed. It was necessary also to develop the soul and spirit in man, and Yoga was the means whereby these were to be developed. That was the work of the Guru—to teach the student how he might develop his inner nature, how the spiritual nature might become active and dominate both the physical and the intel-

lectual. There was the Yoga of action, that which men in the world might follow, doing all action with a religious motive, and without attachment to its results, so gradually becoming fit for the higher Yoga of meditation and contemplation. Of these you may read, if you will, the details in the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*,[1] where Shrî Krishna instructed his disciple Arjuna, and through him many another in the generations that follow.

The basis of the philosophy of the Upanishads is the ONE, unnameable, incommensurable, incomprehensible, That which lies at the root of all existence, and without which existence could not be. That is the nameless; Parabrâhman it is called, that is, simply, beyond Brâhman, Brâhman being the name by which in much of this literature the supreme God in manifestation is known. But behind all manifested Gods, behind the God that is the maker of the universe, behind the supreme God that reveals himself to the spirit of man, there is this boundless, infinite, eternal, unnameable One, the permanence of which must be posited to explain the transient, but which, being unmanifested, we, the manifested,

[1] See chaps. iii., v., vi. more especially, but the dialogue constantly returns to these two forms of Yoga.

the corporeal, are unable to understand or to reach. Then from That emanated the cause of all, that which in its second outward stage is the Λόγος of the Greek philosophy, and which you find as the "Word" in the fourth Christian Gospel, "the Word" that "was with God and was God"; in the Hindû philosophy this is Brâhman, from whom all worlds proceed; not directly, but through many emanating intelligences. So that this world of ours in its definite creation is made by a lower God than Brâhman, *i.e.* by Brahmâ, male and female, the source of living things.

> Brâhmâ, the creator of the universe, the preserver of the world, was first produced among the Gods.[1]

But it is the supreme, the father of spirits, that is the true goal of man, that is the object that he is to seek. It is the "Science of Brâhman" that in all the Upanishads is held up as that after which man is to pursue. We are told that:

> "He is the invisible, unseizable being, without origin, without distinction, without eye or ear, without hand or foot, the eternal, pervading, omnipresent, subtle, inexhaustible being, whom the sages behold as the source of the elements.

[1] *Mundaka*, i. 1.

> As the spider casts out and draws in [its web], as on the earth the annual herbs are produced, as from living man the hairs of the head and body spring forth, so is produced the universe from the indestructible [Brâhman].[1]

However many the Gods in name, they are all one in their essence, all one because they are all but forces and names, forms and entities in whom the One is manifested. Thus it is said that they who spoke the word:

> Sacrifice to this, hence sacrifice to the one or the other God is not proper. His is verily this creation; for he verily is all the Gods, call him Indra, Mittra, Varuna, and Agni.

And another passage:

> He who is Brâhman, who is Indra and Prajâpati, is all these Gods.[2]

Brâhman, the supreme God, as I said, is put forward as man's aim. Man is told to seek after this God, to endeavour to become one with him.

> Manifest, near, dwelling verily in the cave is the great goal; on him is founded all that moves, breathes, and closes the eyes. . . . This is true, this

[1] *Mundaka*, i. 6, 7.
[2] *Brihad Âranyaka*, I. iv.

> is immortal, this, O gentle one, know as [the aim] to be pierced. Seizing as his bow the great weapon of the Upanishad, put the arrow sharpened by devotion . . . know, O beloved, that indestructible as the aim. The sacred word is called the bow, the soul the arrow, and Brâhman its aim; he shall be pierced by him whose attention does not swerve. Then he will be of the same nature with him, as the arrow [becomes one with the target when it has pierced it].[1]

But that great God, the supreme, how shall he be attained? He can be attained by man because the essence of man is one with his own. Says another Upanishad:

> As from a blazing fire in thousand ways similar sparks proceed, so, O beloved, are produced living souls of various kinds from the indestructible [Brâhman].[2]

They are the one Brâhman, the one essence. That which is the central fire can be found again by its sparks, and the spirit that dwells in man in the ether of the heart, as it is called, in the cave of the heart, that spirit being itself one with Brâhman, may be found by man in

[1] *Mûndaka*, II. ii. 1–4.
[2] *Ibid.*, II. i. 1.

whom it dwells. And so the supreme may be attained. The Upanishads weary themselves with efforts to describe how this God may be sought after, how he may be recognised, how he may be found.

> Whoever knows him . . . ["the blessed God" it is said] who, concealed in all beings, is the Lord of the universe . . . cuts the bonds of death. . . . That God whose work is the universe, that supreme soul, who is always dwelling in the hearts of beings, is revealed by the heart, discernment and mind. Those who know him become immortal. . . . For him whose name is infinite glory there is no likeness. Not in the sight abides his form, none beholds him by the eye. Those who know him dwelling in the heart, by the heart and mind, become immortal.[1]

So again, earlier in the same Upanishad, we learn that:

> The ruler [the supreme soul] upholds this universe, but the soul which is not the ruler is enchained by the condition of an enjoyer; when it knows God it is liberated from all bonds. They are all-wise the one and ignorant the

[1] *Shvetâshvatara*, iv. 15, 17, 19, 20.

> other, both unborn ; omnipotent the one, without power the other. . . . When a person knows this Brâhman . . . [then he becomes liberated].[1]

In prayer this was constantly made the very centre of the prayer ; thus in a prayer to the supreme soul come the words, "That same soul am I." So the student is told constantly, "Thou art That," "Thou art Brâhman," thou art one with the supreme. And so, wherever we read, this, the One, is that which is to be sought for, and in that it is in man's heart he is able to discover it —to discover it by meditation, by effort, by the conquering of desire. We are further told that this One is

> The life of life . . . this great unborn soul is the same which abides as the intelligent soul in all living creatures. . . . Unseen he sees, unheard he hears, unminded he minds, unknown he knows. There is none that sees but he ; there is none that hears but he ; there is none that minds but he ; there is none that knows but he ; he is thy soul, the inner ruler, immortal. Whatever is different from Him is perishable.[2]

[1] *Shvetâshvatara*, i. 8, 9.

[2] *Brihad Âranyaka*, IV. iv. 18, 22, and III. vii. 23.

But they never sought to prove the existence of the supreme soul. That which "cannot be proved"[1] was one of its names. For this supreme soul was not to be found by argument, not by intellectual discussion, not by any effort of the mind. Its "only proof," it is said, "is the belief in the soul,"[2] for only the soul could know its own kindred; and the belief in man's soul is the one proof of the reality of God. Is not that true in every faith? Is not that the inner witness that you find in every scripture, no matter what the scripture may be? Not by ratiocination can Deity be discovered. Man knows him only through the soul because the soul is one with him.

Embodied the soul lives, and so the body was called "the divine town of Brâhman,"[3] that in which he dwelt; and the heart, the "ether of the heart," was the supreme centre, the "cave." So we may read of the embodied soul, the soul "embodied in the town of nine gates,"[4] the body with its nine openings, is that which gains experience, and that which, taking on the body, learns by that body the nature of itself and of its God. Thus it was that might be known the God that was without

[1] *Brihad Âranyaka*, IV. iv. 20. [2] *Mândûkya*, 7.
[3] *Mundaka*, II. ii. 7. [4] *Shvetâshvatara*, iii. 18.

commencement, known in the soul by the soul; thus he could be sought after by the corporeal being, as the cause of existence and non-existence, man within himself finding the divine. But only in one way. By conquest of the lower nature, by conquest of the senses, and also by conquest of the mind. For the mind is only a lower manifestation, and he who would know the innermost must go beyond the mind as well as beyond the senses. And so in the *Katha Upanishad* we may read:

> The soul which is subtler than the subtle, greater than what is great, is seated in the cavity of the living being. He who is free from desire and without grief, beholds by the tranquillity of the senses that majesty of the soul. . . . The soul cannot be gained by knowledge, not by understanding, not by manifold science. It can be obtained by the soul by which it is desired. His soul reveals its own truth.[1]

Conquest, then, of the senses, conquest of the mind, conquest of every desire, so that the man might live free in the body, and, free, might know the truth. The highest state of the soul was that of Brâhman. When the senses were subdued, when the mind was

[1] *Katha*, ii. 20, 23.

conquered, when the very soul itself was tranquil, then the fourth state of the soul, that of spirit, was reached, and the man became one with God.[1] This to the Hindû was immortality. He did not look upon it as immortality to pass out of the body through the gate of death, returning again to earth to live another life. He only regarded immortality as won when the wheel of births and deaths had ceased to turn; and then he passed into the condition of the supreme spirit. Immortality gained in this fashion could only be won by those who went beyond the sense of separateness, who had conquered all idea that they were different from this supreme soul; then they were no longer born, then they no longer came back to earth.

> Thus knowing him, a person overcomes death; there is no other way for obtaining liberation.[2]

In the heart all whose bonds are broken in this life, in that heart only immortality is obtained.[3] For according to this teaching reincarnation was the fashion in which the soul gained its knowledge, living from life to life. And so, again, we may read the passage:

[1] *Mândûkya*, 7.
[2] *Shvetâshvatara*, iii. 8.
[3] *Katha*, vi. 15.

> As a goldsmith, taking a piece of gold, forms another shape which is more new and agreeable, so throwing off this body and obtaining knowledge, the soul forms a shape which is more new and agreeable. . . . This soul . . . becomes as are its works and conduct. He whose works are good becomes good; he whose works are evil becomes evil. By holy works one becomes holy, by evil works evil. Likewise others [say] this Purusha has the nature of desire. As his desire so is his resolve, as is his resolve so is his work, as his work so is his reward. . . . Having arrived at the last effect of the work which he here performs, he comes from this world again to this world in consequence of [his] work.[1]

Thus he comes from life to life:

> In this wheel of Brâhman, which is the support as well as the end of all beings, which is infinite, roams about the pilgrim soul, when it fancies itself and the ruler different. . . . As by the use of food and drink the body grows, so the individual soul by volition, touch, sight and delusion assumes successively forms in accordance with its action in

[1] *Brihad Âranyaka*, IV. iv. 4–6.

> the various places. The individual soul assumes by its qualities manifold gross or subtle forms. . . . He proceeds from birth to birth by his actions.[1]

As desire draws it back to earth, only by the killing out of desires can it become free:

> The wise who, free from desires, adore the man, will not be born again. Whoever fancying forms desires, is by his desires born here and there.[2]
>
> When all the desires cease which were cherished in his heart, then the mortal becomes immortal, then he obtains here Brâhman.[3]
>
> Whoever knows the God who is without commencement, without end, . . . becomes liberated from all bonds. Those who know the God . . . relinquish their bodies.[4]

For man, as is taught in another Upanishad, becomes what he reflects:

> Man is a creature of reflection; whatever he reflects upon in this life, he becomes the same hereafter.

"Therefore," it finishes up practically: "Therefore, should he reflect on Brâhman."

[1] *Shvetâshvatara*, i. 6, and v. 11, 12, and 7.
[2] *Mundaka*, III. ii. 1, 2. [3] *Katha*, vi. 14.
[4] *Shvetâshvatara*, v. 13, 14.

Since we change into the likeness of our thought, since we fashion our future by our present desires, we should reflect on the highest, we should think the greatest, and then we shall become what we reflect. To know Brâhman is to be free. This is the "Secret of Death." Some of you may have read Sir Edwin Arnold's translation of one of the most exquisite of the Upanishads under this title, "The Secret of Death." A man is offering all that he has to the Gods. His son, looking at the sacrifice, thinks that the all of the father is but poor and inadequate, and he offers himself in order that the sacrifice may be made complete, and the father gives him to Death. Going to the house of Death he there meets Yama, the king, the lord of Death, and Yama, because he, a Brâhman youth, had remained unwelcomed in his house three days and nights, gives him three boons that he may choose. He chooses for the first that his father may meet him with mind and affection at peace when he is free again from death. That is granted. He chooses as his second the secret of the heavenly fire. That is granted. Then he asks as a third boon, "Does the soul live after death, or does it perish?" "Ask me anything but that," pleads Death; and he offers him all enjoyments, the

wealth and position of a king, spirits from heaven to be his servants, sons and grandsons who shall live hundreds of years, and everything else the heart of man could desire. But the lad will have none of them, for they are all under the power of death. The sons will die, wealth will fade away, life will perish; nothing but this knowledge about the soul will he have for his third boon. At last Death, overcome by his persistency, obliged to keep his word and to give that to which he is pledged, tells the secret of death, that which is the following of the spiritual life, that which is this true goal of man which I have mentioned. He tells him to know the embodied soul

> As the rider, the body as the car, know intellect as the charioteer, and mind again as the reins. They say the senses are the horses, and their objects are the roads. . . . Whoever is unwise, with reins never applied, has the senses unsubdued, like wicked horses of the charioteer. But whosoever is wise, with the mind always applied, has the senses subdued like good horses of the charioteer. . . . The man whose charioteer is wise, the reins of whose mind are well applied, obtains the goal of the road, the highest place of

Vishnu. Higher indeed than the senses are their objects, higher than their objects is the mind [Manas], intellect [Buddhi] higher than the mind, higher than intellect the great soul [Âtmâ Mahân]. Higher than the great one the unmanifested [Avyaktam], higher than the unmanifested is Purusha, higher than Purusha is That; this the limit, the highest road. Being the hidden nature of all beings, it is not manifested; but it is beheld by the attentive, subtle intellect of men of subtle sight. Let the wise subdue his speech by mind, subdue his mind by that nature which is knowledge, subdue his knowledge in the great soul, subdue this also in the placid soul. . . . Whoever has understood [the nature] of Brâhman escapes from the mouth of Death.[1]

That was the final secret of Death.

Out of all this, then, it was that the civilisation of India grew; out of that sublime teaching the greatness of her past was evolved. It was when her people thus believed that India was great; it was that which not only made their civilisation and moulded their polity, but that also which brought back the soul time after time to the same land, evolving

[1] *Katha*, I. iii. 3–6, 9–13, 15.

time after time in the same race. That was the strength of their Brâhmans while the Brâhmans were the teachers of her people; that was the spiritual food which made her the mother of nations, which made her the cradle of the religions of the world.

This lost, came her degradation. The language of the Gods became a dead language known only to the few. This literature passed out of the life of her people, and they grew downwards towards the lower philosophy and the lower faith they hold. And when we look to her future it is in the inspiration of the past that we must seek it. For when her Brâhmans once more take their place as the guides and the teachers of the people; when they no longer keep this knowledge for self, but spread it abroad everywhere; when once more in every Indian household are heard the teachings of the Vedas and the Upanishads; when once more in every Indian household is understood the true meaning of the hymns and of the worship of the supreme in the hands of the father and the mother of the household—then India will begin to wake from the sleep of centuries, and once more to hold up her head amongst the nations of the world. Her civilisation—and this is significant—has lasted. None other has lasted old

as hers is old. She is the most ancient of all the Âryan peoples, the mother of all the sub-races of the Âryan nations. She was old when ancient Egypt was young; very old when Assyria and Chaldæa were born. They have passed away and have left no traces save in their pottery and in their ruins. But India is still a people despite the divisions that degrade her, despite the quarrels that deny the brotherhood of her sons; and she remains with the possibility of a nation because of her past, and because even in her present the ancient form remains. Those ceremonies that to you seem often so childish, those superstitions that to you may seem so degrading, have still in them the possibility of the revival of spiritual life. They are still the form into which the spirit may again be poured. If her vessels were broken, then the water of life would be spilt in the pouring: the vessels are there, polluted and defiled as they are; they can be cleansed, and the water of spiritual life can still be held in them, ay, and shall be held in them in the days to come.

In the hearts of a few amongst her people, a few amongst her Brâhmans, this hope is softly thrilling at the present hour. They are but few, very, very few, known within a very small circle. Their hope is of the future

and not of to-day. They take part in no political controversies; they take part in none of the competitions for place and for money; they care not for Western titles, they care not for Western privilege nor Western honours; their heart is in the past and in the future, and they are living for that future to-day. Amongst the young men of India here and there they find a pupil whose heart they fire with the same flame of love and of longing that burns within their own. For India's future lies not in political ambition; India's future lies not in political greatness; India's future is as a spiritual nation, as the teacher of the world in spiritual truth. Even to-day she stands as a witness against materialism, even to-day amongst the thousands of her yogis—superstitious, degraded and polluted as too many of them are—even still they seek that which is not of the senses, still they seek that which is not of worldly gain. However much you may think them fanatical, you must, at least, admit that they have an aim beyond the aim of the body. And even in their degradation they stand against that worse degradation which would blot out man's spirit and man's soul, would degrade him to the animal to which he is only allied in his form.

And so, looking forward and hoping, we see her awaking from the sleep of centuries, taking up again her ancient faith, taking up again her ancient religion, her ancient philosophy, her ancient literature; taking up again her place as evolver of the inner man, as teacher of the possibilities of the human soul, as leader of the way towards union with the higher nature, and, therefore, towards the higher and grander race that in days to come shall tread upon our earth. For the future is not with the things of the body; it is with the things of the soul. The body perishes, but the soul is immortal. Civilisations rise and fall, but the spirit of man endureth for ever. Like that from which it springs, it is indivisible and immortal, unborn and undying, taking body after body as a garment and throwing them aside when they are worn out and done with. That is the mission of India to the world, that teaching is the claim of India to the love and to the homage of mankind. And the day shall surely come when sleeping India shall awake and rise again amongst the people, and rise, not to lead them along the road of material domination, but along the road of spiritual triumph to union at last with the supreme goal.

Eastern Castes and Western Classes

A Lecture delivered in 1895

I AM to speak to you this afternoon on class distinctions whether in the East or in the West. I am going to try to show you that these distinctions exist and have existed from time immemorial, and are based upon natural divisions; and I am going to compare them as I find them in the East and in the West, as I find them in the past and in the present, because I hold that one of the duties of men is to learn experience from past errors, and to choose in the present and the future by the light of the experience that lies behind; so that in dealing with the subject which both in the East and in the West is raising much discussion and much bitter and antagonistic feeling, I want to take the Caste system on the one side, the Class system upon the other side; to look at both these systems in the past, to look at both these systems in the present, so that thus judging we may decide on our future, and

see what modifications are necessary, what principles are to guide us, in order to improve our national condition and to raise and strengthen our national life.

First of all I suggest to you that there are certain natural divisions that you find in every nation, no matter what may be the social system, the form of government, the religion, or the political constitution, of the people. There are four great natural divisions alike all over the world, without which no society can exist, without which no national life can be carried on; divisions that come to the surface in every nation, although in one nation the arrangement may be recognised and in another arrangement in name may be disregarded. These natural divisions are: first of all a large number of people employed in production in order that men's bodies may be kept alive, in order that food, clothing and shelter and other physical necessaries of men may be supplied. There is a great division of the producing class, a class on which the welfare, the industry, the comfort, the whole national prosperity must ultimately rest. After this great division of the productive caste or class, whichever you like, there is the distributing class, the class that gathers in from the producers all that they produce

in order to scatter it through the community, in order to make it accessible to everyone; so that wherever man is, he may be able to reach that which is necessary for the support of the body, that he may have brought within his reach that which is produced far-off but which he needs for his own maintenance: a vast distributing community, that is the second great national division. After the producing and distributing divisions, you have another great natural division, which is the guardian division of the nation. It includes the soldiers and the sailors that preserve the people from foreign attack. It includes all who administer the law, the police who act as the guardians of internal order, the barristers, the judges, the rulers, the kings, the great class that organises the nation and under whose protection the functions of the producer and of the distributor are carried on in peace and in safety, without foreign aggression and without domestic turmoil. These are the inevitable and natural divisions. If the man who produces is also to distribute, then his production will be badly done; for, while he is carrying about his goods to sell them, his fields will remain untilled, his cattle will remain untended, and all the work in which he ought

to be engaged will be neglected, while he is looking after the distribution that ought to be done by somebody else. And if there is no organising and defending class, then the producer and the distributor will alike both have to be half warriors, half policemen, doing everything badly and doing nothing well. And the sign of a civilised community is that these functions are distinguished, that different men take up different functions, and each is carried on for the welfare of the whole. When you have these great divisions of producer, of distributor, of defender and ruler, there is still one department of human activity that remains unfilled, vital for the progress of the nation, vital for the growth of the people: and that is the function of the teacher, teacher of Science, teacher of Philosophy, teacher of Religion. Unless there be a teaching class, the whole nation lacks one element in its growth, and you have rather a community of animals without minds than of men whose minds are the highest part of their nature, and need training, and education, and development, and guidance, that men may be men and not brutes, that the Soul may live as well as the body if maintained and fed.

Such are the four great natural divisions.

These functions are needed in every nation. These functions must be discharged in every society. The question is not: "Shall there be the functions?" but "Shall they be organised on a definite plan?" so that a nation shall be orderly and not anarchical, shall be contented and not continually at struggle and at strife. For just as in the human body you must have different organs in order that life may go on, as you need the brain to think, as you need the lungs to breathe, as you need the stomach to digest, as you need the hands and the feet to walk, and as the human body would be helpless and constantly in turmoil if the feet and the hands demanded to act as the brain, and if the brain were occasionally used as a method of locomotion, and sometimes the stomach thought that it would do the breathing, and occasionally the lungs took up the function of digestion; so it is that in every civilised and ordered society these functions should be discharged by definite organs, so that you may get rid of strife and struggle and turmoil, and have a society which is a living organism and not a heap of unrelated fragments, continually at strife and coveting each the work of another fragment which it does not discharge.

The next thing to realise, in order that we may at our leisure think out the subject more fully than in a lecture I can deal with it, is that Humanity is a Brotherhood as the human body is a brotherhood. But brotherhood does not mean identity, and brotherhood does not imply a flat dead level of absolute similarity and so-called equality. That is where the blunder so much comes in, and the confusion of thought. The wise are not equal to the ignorant. The ignorant are not equal to the wise. Those who belong, say, to some undeveloped type of man, like the Veddahs of Ceylon, are not equal to the highly developed races that you find in this land, that you find in the West as the leaders of civilisation. There is a difference between the different members of the human family as there is a difference between the baby in the cradle, the father in the world, the grandfather, wise with the experience of long years in life, and therefore the adviser and the helper of the younger. A family does not mean that the baby takes on himself the function of advising, and that the grandfather goes and lies down in the baby's cradle and is told what he ought to do. Brotherhood means that everyone holds his power for the common good, uses his faculties for the

common service. If he is strong, he is strong not to injure and bully the younger members of the family, but to defend them, guard them and so to serve the whole. It is the duty of the elder brother to take care that the weaker is not injured, that the weaker is guarded, that if the weaker wants, the wants of the weaker shall be taken care of before the wants of the stronger; and the father and the mother and the elders would rather starve themselves to feed the little ones than let the little ones starve while the elders have plenty; for brotherhood means common union for the common good, and the greater the strength the greater the duty, the greater the power the greater the responsibility to discharge. There is only one other preliminary point before we have the materials for our study, and that is re-incarnation. If men's lives were but the one that is between one cradle and one grave; if men's lives were bounded by the womb of one mother at the one end and by one funeral pile at the other; if all men's lives were within these two limits, and one came into the world a new-born soul, and passed out of the world never again to return to it, then this human life would become unintelligible, and no social order, with justice as its

basis, could exist. But men have many experiences in many lives, many births under many circumstances, and you might as well say in dealing with one life that it is unjust to send a child to school, and then later let it pass from the school to the college, and not at once take it from the cradle to the Senate House, as say that it is unjust for the undeveloped Soul to be trained, guarded and taught by the more highly developed; for the child-Souls are not ready for the harder work of the world, and the very fact that reincarnation is a reality is a clue to social order, and to the building of a real social state.

Coming now to the question at first of Caste, I am going to take Caste in the past in the East, Class in the past in the West; then Caste in the present in the East and Class in the present in the West. You see the line of thought along which I am going to lead you? First I shall take Caste and Class in the past so that we may see what they were meant for, and then I shall take Caste and Class in the present, so that we may judge if they are doing their duty and are carrying out the objects for which they were designed. And I shall probably say things to you that will raise in your minds objection, both on the one side and on the

other. In dealing with the ancient Caste system, of which I am a supporter, I shall jar on the feelings of some amongst you who look only at the outer surface of the moment, and do not realise the principle underneath; and in speaking of Caste in the present I shall be likely to jar on the feelings of some amongst you, who, because they know the right principle, close their eyes to many of the mistakes that in the present are connected with it. Reform is needed, but reform on the ancient lines; changes are wanted for adaptation to new circumstances, but changes well-considered, and not simply careless striking at everything, and not defending a thing merely because it is attacked. Now as to Caste in the past, I spoke so fully last year that I will only very shortly say now as much as is necessary for my subject. What is the theory underlying Caste in the India of old ages, which is the eternal justification of the system in the eyes of thinking and religious men? First of all, Soul reincarnates, and when it comes into experience of human life it comes without knowledge, it comes without experience, and it comes without training; at first the burdens on it must be very light and the demands made upon it must be exceedingly small in their force and in

their compelling power. Therefore in the ancient system the foundation idea of the lowest caste of the four orders—the Shûdra caste—was the idea of Souls not yet trained, not yet experienced, coming into the world to learn the early lessons in school, as it were, and therefore with the duties a child has, of obedience, of subordination, of service, and of training, and these lessons are as the lessons in a school, that the child-Soul may be taught and gather the experience needed for later life. And just as when you took a Brâhman boy and sent him to a Guru he had to perform services for the Guru, lighting his fire, tending his cattle, as part of his training, so in the great life of the nation, and the long life of the individual Souls, this was the first class, the beginning of the training, the first lowest grade in the school, where little was asked for: hardly any restriction on food, they might almost take what they liked; there was no restriction on travel, they might go wherever they liked. The training must not be too hard for the young Soul, and put on it all the restrictions and difficulties that, when it was strong, it would be ready to endure. And so the life was a free life. They might do well-nigh anything in the way of occupation. They might eat,

drink and travel almost as they would. The restrictions were very light, and the difficulties were very small. It was as it were an infant in a school, where you do not make discipline too severe, for the young ones are not yet habituated to restraint and control.

When in many lives a Soul had been thus trained, when in many lives it had gathered these early lessons, it passed on to the next caste in its birth, and was born in the caste of Vaishyas. There it had a heavier duty laid on it and greater restrictions. For a Vaishya was a twice-born man, and on him came the heavy responsibility of wealth, hand in hand with severer restrictions put upon him. Do not forget that in the old days it was the duty of the Vaishya to hear and study the Vedas. He wore the threefold thread, as a sign of belonging to a twice-born caste. In this birth the Vaishya was to keep the stores of wealth for the nation, wealth not for himself but for the whole community; he was to gather wealth, to be a faithful steward in the national household, so that learning might be supported, so that the nation might be wealthy, and so that everywhere there might be an organisation of labour, plenty of agricultural supervision, plenty of commerce, plenty of trade, and plenty of everything

that was necessary for that material side of the national life. On him was the duty of maintaining the Temples, of feeding the starving, of upholding the learned, of building Choultries for travellers, of opening places of rest and food for pilgrims, so that there might be no starvation, no misery, no wretchedness in the well-ordered household of the Âryan mother. That was the Vaishya's duty, a duty that needs badly to be discharged to-day in modern India.

After many lives of that the Soul was born in the third division, that of ordering the nation, of defending it, of guarding it, of helping it, of keeping peace within, and of protecting it against invasion from without. Heavy was the demand on the Kshattriya in old days. Life was dear to him as to others, wife and children loved by him as by others, but to him came the voice of Dharma: "You hold your life for the national service, for the national welfare. If there is danger, it must not strike the Shûdra, it must not strike the Vaishya, it must not strike the Brâhman. Go out for their defence, and give your life as sacrifice for the people who look to you as rulers and protectors." Because the soul was growing stronger it was ready for the sacrifice, and because the soul was growing stronger it

was ready for the service; the clinging to life which marks the ordinary man must have no place in the heart of the Kshattriya, for he lived for the nation's welfare, and so poured out his blood like water rather than that the people should be struck.

Then there came the fourth division, that of the teacher, that which we know as the Brâhman; hedged about with hard restrictions, cut away from the enjoyment of life; bidden to have no worldly wealth, for wealth belonged to the Vaishya; bidden to have no right to struggle for liberty, for that belonged to the Kshattriya; bidden not to eat and drink and travel about as he liked, for those were the privileges of the Shûdra; but he had the hard life of self-denial, which cut him off from the enjoyment and luxuries of life and marked him to be kept pure in his magnetism, guarding his magnetism for the welfare of the people, not for selfish pride and conceit, not for personal arrogance or for personal domination, but in order that the Gods might have a mouth to speak through to the people, and that the lips of the Brâhman might be the lips that should teach the law.

Such was the basis of the Caste system. Such was the idea of the ancient order. I shall show you when I have dealt with Class

in the West, how confusion has arisen, and how out of confusion discontent and the sense of injustice, which you may find in many a heart to-day.

In Class in the West, looking at the past, there was a similar order. They had there the king and the nobles by hereditary right —by birth-right—and the ruling class, which here would be the caste of Kshattriyas, was the class of men who were the fighters and judges and rulers, whose sons succeeded their fathers, and ruled, fought and made laws by hereditary right. These were the great nobles of England in the past: the king first, then the dukes and the barons and the earls, and so on. All these men were of a hereditary class, just the same as the caste, and exactly the same in its idea: a class of men marked out by birth for particular duties, which were the defensive, the ruling, and the organising duties, that we have seen as one natural division, from which no nation may escape. Then there was the class, the great middle class as it was called, that dealt with commerce, with trade, with the supervision of agriculture, and so on, the mighty class that you read about in the English History, that grew up slowly under the shadow of the warlike nobility, and massing

themselves in the towns of England gradually formed "guilds," as they were called, for all purposes of trade, close bodies for each trade. And then below them, the mass of the cultivating and producing people, tied to the soil, with duties of what were called "feudal tenure," bound to discharge these duties in exchange for protection, ever bound so strictly to the soil that even to-day in England if a man is starving, the first question that is asked is "What parish does he belong to?" That means, "Where was he born?" "Which is the place that is responsible for his maintenance?" If a man who was born in the North of England comes down to London, and is found starving there, even now they send him back to the place where he was born and which is responsible for his maintenance, for his birth marks the place whence his maintenance should come. That comes down from the old days, the Law of Settlement, as it is called. But there is this difference in the fourth caste—the teaching caste. In England the Church was in alliance with the State, the Church was co-extensive with the State; the Church made arrangement with the State, as being the religious side of the people. The difference between the East and the West has been this

in religious matters: that in the East religion permeates every part of human life, whereas in the West it has always been more outside the common or "profane" life; so that it makes a compact, as it were, with the outer life, and you have the Church and the State in strict alliance, instead of religion permeating all, and the whole basis being built on the fabric of a national faith.

Mind you, in the old days these classes were real. To-day they are shams. There was no duke that did not lead; there was no baron that did not take his men into the battle-field, when there was foreign or domestic war. They discharged the duties of their order. And so with the other classes. Therefore there was national prosperity. There was national wealth. And though life was in many ways rough, yet it was a life that in architecture gave the grandest buildings, that in literature, ere it wholly disappeared, gave the mightiest writers, and where the masses of the people also had plenty of food, plenty of clothing and of shelter. There was no such starvation known in England then as England knows to-day, in the later disorder that has come upon her people. England was called "Merry England"; who would call her so to-day?

I come to the present. Now let me take in the present first the Class—the order is the reverse of what I have taken in the case of the past. In England we have still the Classes. We have our Royal family. We have our noble families, and nobility goes by right of birth and nothing else. They rule by right of birth. They make laws by right of birth. They take titles by right of birth. The eldest son of a duke becomes duke when his father dies; the eldest son of an earl becomes earl when his father dies, and the moment that he gets his title, if of age, he goes into the House of Lords and makes laws for the people. The whole of the Empire is ruled by that House, in conjunction with the Crown and with the Commons, and it is filled not by knowledge, not by wisdom, not by age, not by capacity, but entirely by right of birth, no matter what the character or the qualifications of the man may be. Nowadays that Class is a sham, a sham because it does not do the duty which in the old days was joined to the name. It is a sham, because the duke, whose title means leader, does not think of going out to the battle-field when there is danger, but asks other people to go and fight for him while he remains quite safely at home; and so also with the rest of our "great nobility."

The names do not carry with them work, and therefore there is discontent, and therefore there is complaint, and there is agitation, and a cry is going through the land, "Abolish the House of Lords." Why? Because it is a sham and it is a farce; because the men who take the name of leaders do not lead, and because instead of duty they take privilege, and use their rank for personal ends instead of for public service. But there is another way to-day of getting rank, and that is gold. If you have plenty of money, lacs upon lacs of money, if you are so rich that when people look at you they do not see you and your mental qualities, but only a big gold veil that dazzles them, so that they cannot see through it and understand what lies behind; you may be very ignorant, you may be very foolish, you may know nothing about politics, you may never have done anything for the national welfare, but if at the bank you have got a big balance, and have done some party services, then you are a golden idol, and everyone will bow down and do you homage, and then you can get a title. It is a great thing to have a title for which you have done nothing. It is grand to call yourself a lord, not by your inner worth, but by gold. If a man has got plenty of money, he pays so much in contested

elections, and thus serves the Government of the day by getting men they want into the House of Commons. He buys votes practically, although a deliberate purchase of votes is illegal. Then you are a patriot, and not in any fashion dishonest or immoral; and when you have done this many a time, and when you have time after time wasted thousands upon thousands of pounds in this way, then you deserve well of your party, that man has done great service to Government, and therefore must be made a hereditary legislator, and must be rewarded for spending his money by giving him the right to make laws for the Empire and to sit in the Council of the Nobles. In America and in Australia they have not even this little covering of "honour" to hide the nakedness of money worship. Money is the one title to social honour and to social power, and you may have a man as they had in America lately, a man who counted his money by millions upon millions of dollars, and who had gained his money by spreading reports about railways and making them valueless—wrecking, as they call it—and then buying up the property after it had become nearly worthless in the market, and then running it up again when he got it into his hands, and getting large sums for that for

which he had given very little. You hear of the Stock Exchange and of gambling on it. The great secret is this: "Get news before your neighbours. Do not tell them the news that you have. If that news makes any stock you possess worthless, sell it to your neighbour before the news becomes public, before he knows that it is worthless, and then his pocket will be emptied while yours will remain full." When you have done that for a long time you become rich, and then everybody looks up to you as a successful man in the Western world, and you are held up as a model to your race. You know I was on the School Board of London. I used to see the books given to children as prizes. There would be stories of what are called "Self-made Men," and these men were those who started with sixpence in their pockets, and came as little boys with sixpence to some town, and then they were very industrious, and very thrifty, and very careful, and not always too particular about matters of conscience, until at last they got richer and richer, and had a million of money at the bank, and built one or two churches, and a statue was put up to them in the market-place when they died; then they are held up to children as models of successful men, men

who made money too often by the unmaking of their fellow-men. What is the result? The result is discontent, struggle, masses of the working population discontented and threatening revolution. Masses of the working population saying: "Why should these men, who are by no means more moral than we, no more learned than we, no wiser than we, why should they be so wealthy while we are so miserable and poor?" Men do not really think much in their hearts of money, however much they may bow down to it and do it social homage; no man thinks himself really below another, merely because the other is richer than he; and where wealth is the title to honour, there is struggle, discontent and threat, for wisdom may be honoured without jealousy, but the honouring of wealth means social strife, and ever-growing discontent among great masses of the people.

I come to the East, the East of to-day. Take the Caste system as you find it here to-day. How have the changes come about? It is clear, and we all know it, however devoted our belief in the Hindû faith may be, that the four castes of the old time are not really amongst us to-day. If we test them by the test of the Shâstras, if we test them by the test of the Law-giver, we shall find

that they are shams to a very large extent, as much a sham and a farce in the East as the titles of the nobility are a sham and a farce in the West. How has that come about? It has come about by the Caste forgetting its Dharma, its nature and its duty. By a slow change in hundreds and thousands of years, the duties of the Caste have been forgotten. The Brâhman has sought for power and wealth. The Kshattriya has sought to do the teaching work of the Brâhman. The Vaishya has forgotten his duty, and has wanted to take up the work of the Kshattriya, and the Shûdra has claimed to take the duties of the twice-born. No caste is content to do its own duty, but everyone claims to do the duties of everybody else. For hundreds and thousands of years this has been going on, and I say to you, my brothers—and I have the right to speak to you plainly face to face, for I defend you in the West and there speak in defence of you where I find you attacked—I have a right to say to you face to face that the beginning of this degradation lies on the caste that ought to be the noblest, that ought to be the highest, that ought to be the purest, and the degradation began when first the Brâhman coveted wealth, and desired physical authority, when he took the wealth

that belonged to the Vaishya, the rule that belonged to the Kshattriya, and was dissatisfied with his spiritual knowledge, and was discontented with his spiritual authority. For just as a man might turn aside from his wife and take another woman to his home, so has the Brâhman deserted the bride of spiritual knowledge which was his, and has taken to wife the wealth and the jewels and the glories of earth ; and because of that spiritual adultery, a confusion of castes has arisen, and with that confusion what Arjuna prophesied —degradation of the nation and the gradual lowering of the whole of the national life. Side by side with that spiritual degradation, there is the maintenance of an outer rigidity, which gives privilege without discharge of duty. Why should the Brâhman claim his right as a Brâhman, merely because he has been strict in his outer observances, and take the privileges given him in the days when he was the teacher of the people, when he neglects the teaching and has lost the knowledge? The outer form without the inner reality has worked evil ; it has led to conceit, arrogance and the inclination to look down on those who are not Brâhmans, so that there is bitterness in the hearts of the people ; a failure in Brâhman duty while clinging to

Brâhman privilege has made jealousy, anger, discontent and disharmony, where otherwise there might have been, and should have been, peace, love, and progress that is orderly. For mind you, when confusion arises, when the Brâhman deserts spiritual wisdom for the strife of parties, when he deserts spiritual wisdom for a contest for wealth, the Dharma of the Brâhman is broken, and reincarnation largely fails of its effect; for the Brâhman is the Soul, not only the body; the Brâhman is in the life, not only in the birth; and if the duties are not fulfilled, what shall the Brâhman Soul do, when it is coming back, and seeking reincarnation in a family where it shall find the Brâhman conditions, in order to grow and develop and become a model of spiritual life to men? Suppose a Brâhman Soul—I mean a highly developed, a spiritual Soul—is seeking incarnation, and comes to India and searches for a Brâhman's family, and finds the Brâhmans ignorant of Sanskrit, of the Vedas and of the real meaning of the Shâstras, and finds with them the outer appearance and not the inner reality; and suppose that it finds the inner reality in some other caste or even in some other race? Suppose in a Shûdra family it finds men and women who are pious, religious, who are careful to do

their duty well, and who lead noble, pure and useful lives; it may well be that the Brâhman Soul takes on the outer degradation of the body, preferring the degradation of the physical to the degradation of the spiritual. For what is a real Brâhman? A Brâhman Soul or Brâhman body? One without the other? There is where the difficulty comes in. No man is fully a Brâhman unless the Brâhman Soul has a Brâhman body, and unless the Brâhman body has in it the Brâhman Soul. Do you think that I am saying what I cannot bring proof of? What said the great Lawgiver when he was dealing with the Brâhman caste? He told you that sacred learning came and gave herself to the Brâhman, his treasure to be guarded from pollution and disgrace; and then Manu, the great teacher, goes on and says: "As an elephant of wood, as an antelope of leather, so is a Brâhman that is without learning." All three have only an empty name, viz.:—An elephant of wood, an antelope of leather, and a Brâhman without learning—spiritual learning. He must know the Vedas so that he can teach them, understand them so that he can instruct. A Brâhman by birth who cannot do the Brâhman duty is like the wooden elephant and like the leather antelope, very pretty to

look at but utterly useless for all purposes of life. Suppose you get a Shûdra Soul in a Brâhman body. How shall we recognise it? We shall know it by the marks that appear. We shall know it by its low desires and petty ambitions. We shall see a Vaishya Soul in a Brâhman body when the supposed Brâhman wants plenty of gold, when he wants to become wealthy, when he wants big houses and costly furniture. He may wear his thread as much as he will, but the Vaishya Soul is there. By the Law he is no Brâhman, and has no place in the Brâhman caste. So if you find in the body of a Shûdra a soul that is pure, true and noble, but lacking in patience, I say to you that it is no wonder if that Shûdra, cut off from the privileges of the Brâhman but knowing his own life purer than the lives of many Brâhmans around him, says: "This caste is a folly, this caste is an absurdity, this caste is a thing to get rid of. It is not justified by the life, and injustice is done to me. I will do my best and tear it down to get rid of the farce."

I believe in the reality of Brâhmanhood. I who know that there is a Brâhman caste in reality, which is a living and working power in human life to-day, tell you that just because I honour the real Brâhman, do I look with

sorrow and shame on many a nominal Brâhman that I see around me; for, so says the Law, that those that cannot teach are not Brâhmans. The child that knows is older than the grey-headed man that knows not, and if I meet a grey-headed Brâhman and find that he is ignorant of sacred learning, and can teach me far less than I already know, do you wonder if I say that if India is to be helped, this farce must be turned into a reality, and some few at least must lead the Brâhman life, in order to make it possible that the caste may be kept alive for happier times, to serve as the vessels into which spiritual life may hereafter be poured?

There is one other point about Caste. In the old days, it was not rigid as it is rigid now. In the old days a man could pass from one caste to another, if he showed the qualities of the higher. If a Brâhman was born as a Shûdra from a piece of bad Karma, if he worked through it and showed the Brâhman quality, then he was passed on to the Brâhman order, which was a reality and not merely a question of the body and of the form; so that in the Scriptures you find cases even of the outcaste, of men who had no known father and no kind of family to which they could appeal; you find the great

Teachers of the past taking such a boy, if he showed the Brâhman qualities, and judging, not by the outer body but by the inner Soul, and then passing the body through the necessary ceremonies that gave the magnetic purity and the physical conditions. Then there was no discontent, no feeling of injustice, and no feeling of being kept in a place which was below that to which the Soul had a claim. Always there was the open door, and the Soul could pass through it, carrying with it the garment of the body, thus making the body subservient to the real life. But mind you, in these questions of food and other things, there is a real natural truth. The magnetism of food is important. That which you take into your body helps to make the instrument in which your Soul has to work, and there are different qualities of food suited to the different functions that men have to discharge in life. All these questions of eating or not eating together are questions of real importance based on reality. Only in this modern community, they are often based on shams instead of on reality, for magnetic purity is a question largely of the Soul, and no man is pure magnetically who speaks untruth, or loves untruth, or does evil in his daily life. I would rather take

food with a man who in his body belongs to a low caste but in his mind is pure, than I would sit down and take food from the hands of one who is nominally pure, and whom I know to be stained with ambition, and to be soiled with lack of truth and honour in daily life. All this has to be considered. You see the line of thought; namely, not to abolish, but to make real; not to get rid of, but to reform; so that as in the old days there may be bodies fitted for the incarnation of the higher Souls, parents leading the life of Brâhmans, not only in the food and the outer observances of the caste.

Thus I speak, for I hope—having come to make my home in this holy land—to try to show you, to whom I belong by faith and by duty, as time goes on, the lines of practical reform which are needed if our India is to be saved. Discuss the thought amongst yourselves. I have placed before you mere outlines and principles, but I hope, in concert with some of your most religious and pious men, to take counsel and to mark out ways which will make this thing a reality, and give it that spiritual life for the lack of which we are falling, and for the lack of which the world itself is crying out. I know the old countries. I have lived there. I

know how they are suffering, and the causes that have led them to their present state. I know the misery, the poverty, and the degradation. I know the wretchedness and the struggle. I went there to learn it, and I have learned lesson by lesson. For what? I went there and was born there to learn—in order that by experience gathered by my brain that I am using now I might learn what civilisation might teach. I learnt what misery and struggle are in Western lands, that I might gather together the knowledge I could in a form available for use, and then come back to my own race and people, and give them a warning that, alas! they would not listen to, if it did not come through a tongue and from a brain trained in the midst of a civilisation that it denounces and in the midst of the miseries that it knows. For they cannot blind me with the glitter of their civilisation, and they cannot dazzle my eyes with the glory of their outer appearance. I have been underneath, to the slums and misery; I know its folly; I have lived in it. I know its wealth. I know its luxury, and everything for which you are yearning and which is dazzling the younger amongst you to-day. I come back to you and say that this thing is a sham, and that it is a delusion,

it means degradation and not rising; it means spiritual death and not life. Let us take a warning by these lessons; let us learn from their experience to avoid their blunders, and let us join hand in hand, not men of one caste but men of all the four orders which were once appointed. Then let learned men come together to take common counsel for the common good, and little by little, step by step, bringing back the spirit into Indian life and into Indian religion, giving honour where it is due, honouring the Brâhman if he be pure and communicates his spiritual wisdom and is able to teach; honouring Caste not in its name only but in its reality, not the outer show but the inner life. Thus in the centuries that lie in front of us, shall be undone the evil work that has been done, and the nation shall be raised as a whole. That is the work that lies before us. That is the work in which I ask you to take me as your helper; for the life which came from India is given back to India for service, and I sacrifice it to the helping of our race.

East and West

An Article in the "Theosophical Review," vol. xxiv., 1901

THERE appears to be going on in the minds of many English Theosophists a good deal of consideration of Eastern and Western ideals. And as much of the discussion appears to circle round my own views, or supposed views, it may perhaps be as well that I should state those views clearly. This is not done with the idea of imposing them on any, but merely with a view to clarify one part of the discussion.

Certain fundamental principles appear to me to govern all sound opinions on national ideals, and it may be well to begin with a statement of these.

1. No past condition of a nation can be reproduced, for a nation cannot re-tread the path along which it has evolved. Principles can be re-established, but the application of them must be adapted to the new environment.

2. A national ideal to be useful must be in harmony with the national character, and

must grow out of the national past. It must be a native of the soil, not an exotic.

3. Every nation has its own line of evolution, and any attempt to make it follow the line of evolution of another nation would be disastrous, could it be successful; but—as a matter of fact—any such attempt is foredoomed to failure, because it clashes with the world-plan. The world exists for the evolution of the Soul, and for this evolution varieties of experience are necessary. Races, sub-races, families, nations, like the two sexes, subserve evolution by their differences, and offer the variety of soil and culture which brings out the varied capacities of the Soul. If they were reduced to a dull uniformity, their value as classes in the school wherein the Soul is educated would be lost, and the Soul would have one quality over-developed and another undeveloped.

It is a necessary deduction from these principles that any writer or speaker who is trying to shape the public opinion of any nation, should saturate himself with the past of that nation, distinguish clearly between root-principles and passing manifestations of them, identify himself in thought and feeling with that nation, and hold up before it the ideal which will appeal to all that is best in

the national feeling, and vivify and strengthen all that is noblest in the national intelligence. He should seek to supply defects, to lop off excrescences, to moderate exuberances, but should always work within definite limits, not seeking to change its particular type, but to evolve that type to its highest possible expression. It follows, one may venture to remark, that when people of another nation read utterances addressed to a particular people, and not to mankind at large, it is reasonable to remember the special object of the utterances, and not to take them as though they were addressed to themselves.

For instance, we read in the September number of the *Review* of an "assumption, common among our members, that our Western ideal of civilisation has to be remodelled upon the more or less historical ideal which Mrs. Besant has woven for us out of the stories of the *Mahâbhârata*." If there be any such assumption, it seems to me to be founded on a fundamental misconception of the use of a "historical ideal." Such an ideal should be woven out of the principles on which a given nation had been successfully evolving, and is intended for that particular nation and not for others. Moreover, it is not intended, in weaving

such an ideal, that the exact conditions of the past should be reproduced—see Principle 1—even in the nation to which the ideal is held up; but that the nation, recognising the principles which underlay a period of greatness, and the neglect of which accompanied its decay, may revive those principles, and give them such new expression as the circumstances of the time demand.

Let us take as an example the question of Caste in India. It was an external recognition in a social order of the existence of four fundamental social types, great stages of evolution, through which Souls pass in their development. The Manu of the Fifth Race based his social organisation of the eldest sub-race on a recognition of these stages. He guided the Souls highly evolved in knowledge and dispassion to take birth as teachers and priests, those highly evolved in power as kings and warriors, others as merchants and traders, the least evolved as artisans, labourers and servants. He marked out for each type its Dhârma, or law of growth, by following which it might reach perfection. This organisation brought about a period of great splendour and prosperity in India.

As less evolved Souls were born into this order, for their training and evolution, their

imperfectly developed qualities could not sustain the admirable model instituted by the great Lawgiver, and so the castes degenerated, and their respective Dharmas were less completely followed. Further, there sprang up within them innumerable artificial subdivisions, growing out of the spirit of separateness and exclusiveness, and Caste gradually came to be regarded as a mark of social distinction, showing the consideration to be accorded to the members by society, instead of as a marking out of the nature of the service to be rendered by the members to society. Thus out of the base marriage of Caste to Separateness, instead of the true wedlock of Caste with Service, there sprang a huge and monstrous progeny of social evils, which preyed, and are still preying, on the life of India.

Now those who seek to build for India the foundations of a happy future may well wish to disentangle the principle of the fourfold order from the rubbish which overlies it in modern times, so that the nation may have the benefit of a national tradition, deep-rooted in its nature, and may thereby evolve in sober and orderly fashion, and avoid the social conflicts which threaten Western civilisation. But this does not mean that they dream of graft-

ing on Western civilisation an unsuitable exotic Eastern graft, or think that an institution suited to the genius of a particular Eastern nation should be thrust on Western peoples to whose genius it is unsuitable.

As Dr. Wells puts it very admirably, the duty of the Westerner is to find out for himself into which of the four ways of life he has been born, and then try to walk in it. He may learn from the East that there are four distinct ways, and he may further learn the existence of Dharma, the law of growth on each of these ways. These general lessons he may truly learn and be the better for them, much clarifying by these his views of life. But that does not mean that he is to transplant Caste into the West. Caste is only one temporary manifestation of a root-principle in nature, and the man of the West is concerned with the root-principle, and not with one special and temporary manifestation thereof.

Another misconception that clouds many utterances in the West on Eastern, or rather on Indian, ideals is that the Dharma of the Brâhmana—the priest and teacher—is taken as that of the Indian generally, and the dispassion of the true Brâhmana is regarded as a general characteristic of the nation. But this is by no means the case.

Misled by this idea, Dr. Wells remarks that "the native regiment is a far more important aid to the regeneration of India than any number of Hindû colleges." It is true that the great caste of Kshattriyas was broken in pieces at Kurukshetra; but it is also true that India has ever had, and still has, within her borders, much of the best fighting material in the world. Her warrior races still hold their own side by side with the best troops the West can bring into the field, and their admirable courage, discipline and self-control have been lately praised by the Indian Secretary and by the General commanding in China. If the Indian regiment could regenerate India, she need never have degenerated. It is the lack of a *national* ideal and of a wide patriotism that has caused Indian degeneration; her regiments have fought for their provinces, not for their country.

I have seen the statement that "we conquered India by the sword and hold her by the sword." To make this true, two words —"of Indians"—must in each case follow the word "sword." India was conquered by her own sons siding with Britain against local hereditary enemies, State against State, and British astuteness used Indians to subdue Indians, and by playing off local jealousies

against each other she conquered each State in turn. And so in the Mutiny. British rule was saved by great Indian chiefs, and it is they who still safeguard it, preferring English rule to that of their rivals. This does not derogate from British courage, but, however brave, a score of men cannot conquer hundreds.

It may be, however, that even "Hindû colleges" are not useless in the manufacture of manly fibre. The other day I watched our college football team as it met a team of British soldiers, and though the lads were utterly overmatched in weight and skill, they fought to the end with vigour and undiminished "pluck" and are eager to meet the same team again. English public schools have a good deal to do with the formation of English character, and similar training here may not be useless.

To return to the main thesis of this article. We do not want Westerners to adopt Eastern ideals, but merely to learn from them anything they have of use, and weave that, in suitable form, into their own type. And so we want Indians not to adopt Western ideals, but to learn similarly whatever is useful in them and weave it into their own type. Our idea is not to make the Englishman a fifth-rate Indian, or the Indian a fifth-rate English-

man, but that each should maintain his own essential type, enriched, but not transformed, by what each may learn from each.

Souls that have had several successive Indian incarnations and are now embodied in the West will inevitably be drawn to the *forms* of Indian teachings, and find in them the spiritual expression most suited to their own idiosyncrasies. But this should not lead them to force on other Westerners, who have not shared their Indian experiences, the forms of Truth most congenial to themselves. But here, *in India*, the reverence shown to Hindûism by one of the "conquering race" is an important factor in leading Hindûs to recognise the value of their own philosophy and religion; just as the recognition by Schopenhauer of the value of the Upanishads did more to turn the mind of young India to those priceless documents than the asseverations of a dozen Paṇḍits. Example goes further than precept here as everywhere else, and in the great work of rebuilding a nation no useful factor can be cast aside.

The work of Indian revival, however, would be hindered, not helped, by slavish copying of her ideals in the West, or by any foolish attempt to transplant them into a foreign soil. And what is yet more important, the use of

East and West, as differing schools of evolution for the Soul, would be seriously diminished if they became too much alike, and no far-seeing person could wish to bring about such a catastrophe. But it is surely possible for the Theosophist, at least, to be wide-hearted and tolerant, and to value sufficiently his own Western birthplace, if Westerner he be, without decrying the East.

The Means of India's Regeneration

A Lecture delivered in 1895

THIS afternoon, my Brothers, I will try to lay before you that which many people would say is the most practical of the subjects on which I have been speaking during the last week. "The means of India's regeneration" naturally suggests the idea of a proposal of some definite kind, a proposal on certain lines which may be adopted, which may reach the national mind, encourage national aspirations, and which may enable this ancient people again to hold their place among the nations of the world. I am going to try to suggest to you this afternoon certain definite lines, which are not only completely in harmony with the ancient thought of India, but are wholly inspired by the ideals which I have been striving to place before you during the last week. While, in fact, the existence of this ideal in the heart of the people is necessary in order to make them possible, they are yet, to some extent, the lines of

action which may be taken by all those who work upon the physical plane, and may thus afford an outlet for their energies in dealing with the facts around them. In order that reforms may be in any sense successful, it is necessary that the ideal of which I have been speaking so much may both be true and be accepted throughout the length and breadth of the country; that the people should regard it as desirable. In order that the actions of Indians may be properly guided and may be inspired to activity, not only does it need to be taught as an ideal from the platform, to be taught as an ideal through the press, but also that those who accept it should act up to it in their daily lives; that they should make it the subject of deliberation and collective thought, for *that thought* is after all the greatest force. The body is mutable, it changes, but a man's thoughts are potent, and his actions are moulded by the thoughts with which they come into contact, so that every person by thinking of that which he desires to accomplish, has really laboured for its accomplishment even more actively than those who are engaged in the outer work; for in every reform which is brought about, this agency of thought is above all things most necessary. By thinking definitely of what we desire to accomplish,

we touch as it were the very springs of action, and improvement must inevitably result. Those who are neither speakers nor writers, those who are not much able to influence their fellowmen by any personal argument, by any personal attempt, they may still bring their thoughts to bear on India by a sustained and deliberate effort, by wishes for India's regeneration, and then these thoughts joining together upon the thought-plane shall in due time come out into action on the external plane, and every person who takes up action shall be strengthened and inspired and made more and more likely to succeed by those thoughts which are behind him and around him and which thus find expression upon the outward plane of deed.

'Realising, then, that the ideal which I have put before you is a spiritual one, that above all, the spiritual greatness of India is the first point to be considered, everything else flowing from that, let us see by what means that may be called "practical" we can direct the stream of Indian energy into certain definite channels—channels every one of which shall be directed to a single point, and in which we may set pouring together the various streams that are to work national regeneration. Now those of you who look

at the Indian Society of to-day must see as a result of their observations that there is a continually increasing pressure put upon two especially of the ways in which educated men must gain their livelihood. The profession of the law and that of the civil service are becoming more and more overcrowded. These are the only two avenues of livelihood for which young men are educated, where they show the higher intellectual faculties. So that you will find the ablest men, the men of action, the men of intellect, in these professions, and the most promising boys, who are the men of intellect of the future, are being continually passed either into the civil service under the government, or into the profession of law,—these being the two which are the best paid of all the professions, the professions in which intelligence and will are most likely to bring the largest natural results. Now it is idle to quarrel with the tendency of an ordinary man to seek to employ his energies in the way that brings him what he regards as the best return ; you may honour the self-sacrifice as noble, that gives itself to an ideal which brings no reward in the form of wealth, but you still must needs reckon with the mere man of the world who seeks the things of the world. So that the question

arises, how are these energies to be directed, especially if regard is to be had to the common good, so that the various capacities of able men may co-operate towards the general advancement, having in view the object proposed—the helping of India—and also the due employment of individuals in a remunerative way. If you realise that these two means of livelihood are becoming overcrowded, then will come the question: "Is it possible to find some other means of using the national capacity, which at one and the same time shall not only offer an opening for those who desire to be really useful to the country, but shall also afford support to men whose gifts are not so high, but who are willing to devote themselves to forms of professional employment which will give them a reasonable and fair return for their labours, and enable them to keep themselves and their families in a respectable position in society?"

Now clearly there is one form of employment available in India if we could really form a public opinion strongly in favour of it; a form of employment which along one line would give work of the most vital importance to be done by some of the most spiritually-minded and intellectual men in the country, and which in its several branches

would offer a reasonable means of livelihood not only to these but also to men of average intellectual capacity, and would at the same time stimulate certain of the trades of the country as it spreads, and so would actually benefit those different classes of the community, and benefit them ever more as it spreads more widely and more deeply. Now this special scheme is that which will include every branch of activity concerned with the spreading of Sanskrit learning, in all the many directions which are possible, not only by helping the learned men employed as advanced teachers and writers, but which also would help large numbers of subordinate teachers, and would link the Indian peoples more closely into one.

Of course the first part of this scheme would necessarily be an attempt to found, in one centre after another in the country, Sanskrit colleges where the teaching of Sanskrit would be in the hands of learned men *essentially* of the *Pandit* type, as opposed rather for the moment to that of the ordinary professors—I mean the men who look upon Sanskrit as a sacred study and who bring to it real enthusiasm and real devotion, as well as the idea of teaching it as a profession. Now it is true that a few such colleges do-

already exist in this country, but they ought to be very largely increased in number; that increase could be easily brought about if a public opinion could be formed, sufficiently strong, which made a knowledge of Sanskrit a real necessity, so that no man would be regarded as an educated man unless a knowledge of the Sanskrit tongue formed part of his education. Those who deal at all with the question of education will be aware that *all* those who regard it thoughtfully, as a training of the powers of man—not as a mere cramming with facts—take up certain types of study as necessary for the cultivation of the higher intellectual faculties. It is not the question of training a young man so that he should learn just exactly those things, and no others, that he can turn into opportunities for wealth-gathering in after life; the object of education is to turn out a man whose faculties shall have been trained carefully in various directions, so that he shall have acquired delicacy of thought, the power of sustained attention, the habit of mental culture, which makes all the difference between an educated and an uneducated man, and which is absolutely necessary for the advancement of the race if intellectual advancement is to form a basis for future Spiritual development.

Now glance for a moment at the West, and see the changes that are going on there. For hundreds of years in the West the cultivation of the classics, Greek and Latin, was regarded as absolutely necessary for what was called the education of a gentleman, and men who were ignorant of the classics were regarded as *uneducated*; I do not mean they had to be scholars of the comparatively small class who gave the whole of their time to literary pursuits—I am speaking of the men who had no pretensions at all to stand before the world as scholars, *i.e.* as *Pandits*, of the ordinary nobles and middle-class gentry, as they were called; the whole of these as a matter of course were trained in the knowledge of Greek and Latin, and no man could take any high position in the country unless he possessed these essentials of a gentleman's education—a fair knowledge of the classics. For such a knowledge was always expected in ordinary discussions among men, and this training of the intellect gave a certain definite strength and refinement of thought, and what was called culture implied always a knowledge of these languages and of the great literature found in them; and only by *such* cultivation men could be trained to rigour and delicacy of thought, and refinement and polish of

expression, and therefore it was a part of every gentleman's education, and was not confined to the literary class alone. Now in England, under the stress of the struggle for existence, these languages are every day more and more falling out of general education, and you will find amongst the thoughtful people of the country the complaint that these young men who are now being "educated" are by no means such cultured or educated men as were always found in past generations; that they pick up a mere smattering of knowledge, just enough to enable them to pass their examinations, and which they forget as soon as the examination is over. So that society becomes more and more frivolous and less and less thoughtful, and you get numbers of people with only average mental capacity who have little chance of ever improving it to the very best advantage because of the loss of this higher mental culture.

Now the same is true of India, only with this difference, that whereas in European countries they have used Latin and Greek as the instruments of culture, you have your own ancient language which lies at the root of your vernaculars, a knowledge of which opens out to you the grandest literature the world has yet produced. A knowledge of

that literature should be incumbent upon every man who claims to be educated, on every man who hopes to hold intelligent converse with his fellows; it is needed not only by *Pandits*, not only by teachers, not only by writers, but by every man who claims to have intelligence *at all*, who wishes it to be exercised for the sake of possessing intellectual knowledge, and not merely for the fact that knowledge may be sold for so much money. For mind you, this is a question of vital importance in the development of the race. Unless you develop the mental faculties, you cannot rise amongst the nations of the world. If your mental faculties are only directed to subjects which enable you to keep yourselves alive, then you strike at the very root of the development of your nation, and you must sink lower and lower amongst the peoples of the world. For the average intelligence is what you have to regard from the standpoint of the nation. And in order that men may be competent to meet the needs of this country it is requisite that they should have a knowledge of Sanskrit in order to encourage the opening out of its literature, and for spreading the knowledge of what was thought by the ancient men of this country among the people at large; so that the people shall look back to

the past, and gain from that past knowledge and experience. And by the pride which grows up in the human heart in feeling itself linked with a mighty past, all that is sympathetic in the past shall become capable of working in a future and impress on that future something of the spiritual greatness which that past has shown. Now it is clear that if it should be demanded in India that young men, taking them as a class, should be trained in this knowledge of Sanskrit, you would immediately have a demand for teachers far above anything which at present obtains, and you would increase, by thousands upon thousands, the number of those who desire to learn in order that they may follow teaching as a profession and thus would increase your teaching class enormously, to meet the demands of the multiplying numbers of pupils. And so you will train up large numbers of men who will not only find their means of livelihood at once, but also their pleasure, in teaching, knowing that by their teaching they were strengthening the national spirit, and pointing the way to the union between all cultured intelligences over the whole surface of the land. For be sure that a common language is something more than a mere convenience ; it is a tie which binds heart to

heart, mind to mind. You have the choice of two languages which might, either of them, form the common language of India. The vernaculars are different; men of one province cannot hold converse with men of another because of this difference of language which keeps them apart, more or less as strangers to each other. What is happening? At the present time the common language amongst the educated classes is a foreign tongue. The common language of the educated Bengali and the educated Madrasi is English, and this is really becoming the common tongue of India; the men of the different provinces converse in this language and use it for inter-communication, all being separated by their different vernaculars. But would it not tend far more to national feeling if you had as your common language the mother of these vernaculars? Would it not tend to more national feeling if intelligent men should naturally and readily converse in the language of the ancient books, and find themselves on one common ground, as it were, of a common mother tongue? You should not undervalue the effect of the communications which make men feel the tie of a common kindred, which make men feel as brothers instead of men of different races.

You should use the language now common to the *Pandits* of all the different Indian races—Sanskrit; you should use it as a bond to bind the different races into one, so that nations conscious of a common descent should feel a desire for common work, for common co-operation at the present time. Nor is that all. The *Pandit* at the present time is educating his son not to follow his own profession, but to follow that of the law or the civil service; he does not bring up his son to his own profession, knowing that that may mean for him starvation. But as this demand for a knowledge of Sanskrit increases, as I have said, larger and larger will become the number of those desiring teaching; and then *Pandit* after *Pandit* may educate his son to acquire the deeper knowledge which is necessary for the teacher, knowing that from it will come a reasonable source of livelihood, a definite and certain profession by which he may live in the land.

Nor again is that all. The colleges which will be founded should have two great characteristics. First, they should be endowed for the support of the teachers attached to the colleges; that is, the teachers should not have to depend for their support upon the payments made by the pupils. For

it is an honourable and ancient rule of Sanskrit teaching that the pupils should be taught without fees. Any innovation on this ought to be resisted if you wish to keep up the revived ancient feelings; you should not introduce the modern method of fees, which is being protested against even in the West. The teaching to students must be free. Instruction should not be withheld because the boy is unable to pay a fee for being taught, and if some pay and some do not you introduce a vulgar money distinction between the pupils. *Every* son of India who desires to know the ancient tongue should find teaching open to him without the necessity for payment, as it was in the ancient days; and not only so, but there ought to be provision made for the maintenance of the students, so that they may be able to pursue their studies without any anxiety, and may be able to learn in order to be fitted to teach afterwards what they have learnt. The colleges should further not only be thus endowed sufficiently for the maintenance of *Pandits* and pupils, but also sufficient endowment should be made for providing an income for those who, being endowed with special ability to serve the nation in this department, should be rendered able to employ their talents to

build up a modern Sanskrit literature, not wholly unworthy of the literature of the past; that is, that there should be foundations which should support learned *Pandits* who would thus be enabled to give the whole of their time, of their talents, of their thoughts, not only to comment upon the ancient books but also to write original works which would be more and more in demand as the knowledge of Sanskrit spreads. So that you would have a class of writers, composed of some of the most brilliant brains amongst you, men who feel themselves able to influence their fellows with their pens, men who would find a way open to them to revive the past glories of the mother-land, without being subjected to starvation, or obliged to make sacrifices which only come from the noblest, and therefore only from the few. So that in this way you would be building up a foundation for teachers, a foundation for pupils, a foundation for writers, and as the pupils grew into men, a general demand would arise for a wider circulation of the ancient literature, and thus would also be benefited the trades concerned with the printing, binding, and selling of books. This demand for Sanskrit literature would grow enormously, for it would be prized by the

cultivated classes that would be evolved by this system of education. So that not only those who will be educated would benefit, but you will also have a vast increase of activity which would give employment to great numbers of people in the production of books; and in this way you would find, as in the West, great classes of labourers and of distributors who are wanted along these lines of activity, and who would supply the demands of the cultivated classes which will have been brought into very active existence by the method above sketched.

But of course the question naturally arises: "How is this to be brought about from the pecuniary point of view?" The chief appeals should certainly be made to the wealthy rajahs of the country, who have vast sums of money under their control, and who may well be appealed to to spend some of it at least in introducing and helping on the scheme. There are some men with enormous accumulations of wealth; there are others with wealth which they waste to a very considerable extent, but who may be stimulated, from a sense of national duty, to give money to found such colleges, which would rise as their permanent memorials, for the well-being of the Indian people. Surely

this would be a more glorious employment for their funds than in mere show or in the raising of useless kinds of memorials ; if a man wants to perpetuate his name, if he has a desire that his name should go down to posterity, how should such a man do more wisely than by founding a great educational endowment, which shall go on century after century as a source of help to the nation? Far more glorious would be such a memorial than the empty memorial of a statue or a monument merely left behind, without any thought of duty to the nation in the future and without any thought of the welfare of the Indian people. Nor is that all. If you can form a public opinion of that kind, if you can induce some of the wealthy princes to aid in such a national movement, I have little doubt that you would obtain support from and the movement would be helped by the supreme Government; and I have still less doubt that such a movement, if it were really supported by public opinion, and had the weight of the educated Indian community behind it, would receive at least the respectful consideration of the Government that rules the nation, so that some help might come from that Government as a tribute to a national movement which ought to be en-

couraged by the English Government which is ruling over the land. For if you take the Government as a whole, it has a desire to do justice and it has a desire to meet the wishes of the people over whom it rules; and such a movement as this, a really national movement, could not and would not be neglected. And this would also bring you the support of those ambitious wealthy Indians, who will help nothing that is not looked on with favourable eyes by the rulers of the day.

There is just another point I wish to put to you about Sanskrit. At the present time some of the greatest treasures of Sanskrit learning are going to England for translation, to be translated by Englishmen, by Orientalists who take an interest in these works, but who have no belief in their deeper meanings, who do not share in the religious faith which inspired them, who do not share the philosophic views which they embody, who have no sympathy with the national traditions, and therefore who will never give the spirit of the originals, however accurately, however grammatically they may translate them. I myself, with my limited experience, know of more than one priceless untranslated work which has been taken over to England to pass into the hands of English Orientalists for translation. Why? Because

no one could be found here to do it. One work has been thus taken over lately to England to be translated and issued at a cost of £800, and this after a fruitless search of many months for a translator here. I ask you whether it would not be better that members of the Hindû religion should translate these Hindû religious books themselves; whether you think it creditable that they should be sent to the West for translation by men who do not share your beliefs and have no sympathy whatsoever with your religion? Is it likely that translations of this kind can be true to the spirit of the originals? Is it likely that the delicate points, the shades of thought will ever be truly caught? Is it likely that with the aid of a grammar and dictionary, a mere comparison of book with book, that the meanings of deep religious books will be faithfully rendered, that there will be understanding of the subtle distinctions in belief, only to be found in the hearts of men who are at one with the religion itself, and are contained in the true meaning of these books? Therefore you want to build up a class in India, educated in Sanskrit and also in English, who will be able not only to give the *spirit* of the original Sanskrit, from their knowledge of the very delicate shades of thought of the Hindû

religion, but who, also possessing a sound knowledge of English, will be able to give the most accurate equivalents of the terms and not simply give the dictionary English meanings which now disfigure the translations. So that you need to have men who shall at once be masters of the Sanskrit and masters of the English tongue to translate the treasures of this ancient literature, which are now being continually sent for translation to the Western world. But mind you, this desire to know the treasures of the Eastern thought is beginning to grow in the West; this desire to *know* the philosophy of India, to understand its subtleties, to realise something of its complexities of thought, is a growing demand at the present time, and you have many priceless works which need to be translated in order to elicit the meaning of the books which are already in an English form. A book, for instance, like the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* has a very wide circulation in its English dress. Would it not be then well to circulate some of the commentaries, as for instance that of Srî Sankarâchârya? Would it not then be well to have an English translation of it published, so that the thoughts of the great Hindû teacher may be made known, which should throw some light upon its contents?

And further, in this way you raise your nation. In this way again, in time, India will rule the world; when this is done, India will be able to challenge the judgment of the educated world, and with one voice it will pronounce for the supremacy of her literature, as everyone has done who has acquainted himself with it; for there is no dissentient voice amongst Sanskrit-knowing Western people; they all are of one mind as regards the value of Sanskrit literature, however much and variously they may disagree about special books; there is but one opinion as to its profundity and grandeur; and this opinion is spreading in the West, that all things spiritual come from the East. Do you suppose that when this is more widely recognised, it will not react here, that the regard and respect and admiration of the West paid to your splendid literature will not avail to raise you as a people in the eyes of the world, by the homage of intelligent men gathered from every nation?

Supposing, then, that this Sanskrit revival takes place, and there are signs of it already, then you must remember that you need to do something for the younger boys who are entering the gates of learning, to prepare them for this higher education. Now the

great thing to do with boys in primary schools is to inspire them with enthusiasm for the motherland, by choosing carefully the kind of books which are placed in their hands for study. First of all, you ought to encourage a study of the vernaculars that are based on the Sanskrit, and should preserve their type; for in the case of the Northern Hindûs, their languages are derived entirely from the Sanskrit. But what is happening to-day to these vernaculars? More and more there is a change working; you have a vernacular, Hindi, which ought to be Hindû, becoming full of foreign terms, to the diminution of words taken from the Sanskrit. So that it is becoming less and less a Hindû language, and more and more a foreign tongue, associated with meanings and words drawn from Arabic and Persian sources. More and more the vernacular which is based upon the Sanskrit is being pushed aside and forgotten by the people, thus denationalising them still further and separating them from their most cherished and ancient traditions.

Now in regard to this question of books and teaching. The teaching in every school to which Hindû boys are sent for purposes of study ought to be based upon the Sâstras, so training the boys in the knowledge which is to guide their path in life. They should

be taught the ways of Âryan morality; they should be taught the stern and rigid sense of duty, which should pervade all their character; they should be taught the meanings which are expressed in symbolism, so that whenever they are challenged in the world, they may be able to justify their own faith intellectually, by explaining it; morally, by showing purity, uprightness and blamelessness of life; and spiritually, by living *openly* a life which aspires to the life hereafter: thus becoming Hindûs in the truest and fullest sense of the word.

Then with regard to secular learning. I saw the other day, in looking over some books in a school, that they were English school-books, and as I was turning over the pages I found that though the books would have been suitable for boys in an English school, they were remarkably inadequate for the boys of an Indian one. For the information on geography, productions, natural objects, etc., which was given about India was absolutely out of all proportion in comparison with the information given about European nations. Now if you take a primary book in an English school you will find that it deals mainly with England: its history, geography, products, industries, trades, and so on. But here the boys are taught much about England, and

very little are they taught about their own country. The book gives a Hindû boy details of English towns—now what is the use of that knowledge to him? And he is left without any knowledge of the detailed history and geography and products and industries of his own country, where the whole of his life is to be spent, and to which his thoughts should ever be turned. The foundation of an intelligent knowledge of his own country should primarily be laid in every boy's mind, and the knowledge of other lands later, when that about his own has been mastered. Press upon the educational department the use of books relating more to India and the peoples of India, which shall give their history at greater length and the history of other nations more briefly. The history and geography of India should be soundly taught, and the acquiring of a wider knowledge may be left to those who have the time and inclination to pass on to higher schools. It is but just that the poor Indian boys should learn the history of their own land, rather than that of lands with which they will have nothing to do in the course of their lives. I have seen a boy give quickly the name of the capital of Switzerland, and hunt confusedly in the South of India for Kashmir. What sort of a national

education is that? Try to change it and make a public opinion which will call for this change as regards the work of primary education.

Thus, passing on, now rouse the boys to enthusiasm and pride by the history of Ancient India; tell them of that. Tell them how India was really great, cultured, full of piety; tell them all the wonderful tales which are to be found in the ancient literature, tales enforcing the noblest morality; so that they may grow up thinking of India with pride and devotion, and longing to do their share in serving the nation, because the nation is worthy of all sacrifice and service. Enthusiasm in the young is easily aroused; teach them what will fire their hearts; for the young are touched and moved easily by noble ideals, and if you give them anything to touch their hearts, if you give them anything to move their enthusiasm, if you familiarise them with the past history of their own country, if you wake their devotion to their national faith, the time will come when they will turn away from the West to the motherland. And these boys, grown into men, shall be bound with every bond that can link the Indian to his home, and from such men will come the salvation of India.

Pass from this ideal of education, which might breathe through India the breath of a new life, to another line of work, which is one of serious importance to a caste on the regeneration of which depends much of the hope of India's regeneration. It would be well to establish throughout the country organisations such as those which are actually at work in the Punjab, for helping and training the sons of Brâhmans in sacred learning and in the intelligent discharge of religious rites. The organisations are called, "Brâhman Sabhàs," and the objects are stated to be:—"To encourage the Brâhmans to learn 'Sanskrit,' '*Dasâ Karma Vidhi*,' '*Sanskàra Vidhi*,' and to endeavour to ameliorate the condition of the Brâhmanical religion." Every member is bound to learn Sanskrit, to regularly perform the daily rites of "*Nitya Karma*," and the ceremony of the investiture with the sacred thread, strictly in accordance with the *Sâstras* at the proper age, with the proper rites. Each Sabhà should have a school attached to it for teaching Sanskrit, the daily rites, and "*Sanskàra paddhati*" to the sons of Brâhmans; a committee of *Pandits* should examine the school annually, and grant certificates to the students who pass. Only those Brâhmans should be permitted to officiate at religious ceremonies

who hold these certificates, and none others. Other important rules run :

Each Brâhman shall be bound to teach Sanskrit to his children.

The Brâhmans acting as priests shall be bound to perform the required ceremonies strictly according to the Sâstras and with sincere devotion, even if the *Yajman* be poor and unable to spend much money.

If the *Yajman* be a Brâhman, and does not desire to have the religious ceremonies performed with a sincere faith, the priest shall decline to officiate, and on his refusal no other Brâhman shall officiate for him.

Students from the city, or outside, who are poor and have no means of support, shall be fed and taught by the Institution.

Such Sabhâs would do very useful work by encouraging well-instructed priests, and also by putting an end to the exactions of disputing priests, especially at places of pilgrimage, where many scandalous things occur from time to time from the sheer greed of gain. Information about the Sabhâs may be obtained from Rai B. K. Laheri, Ludhiana, Punjab.

Useful also are the Sabhàs for Hindû boys and students, started by Col. Olcott, President of the Theosophical Society, and now multiplying rapidly through the country. They are designed to give Hindû boys the strength that comes through association, throughout the period of school and college life, a period so dangerous to their religious faith under present conditions. The boys bind themselves to speak the truth, live chastely; and perform their religious duties according to the *Sâstras*. The Sabhàs are united into a Hindû Boys' Association, founded at the end of 1894, which issues a boys' journal monthly. Information about this can be obtained from the Secretary of the Theosophical Society, Benares.

Those who, like myself, desire the maintenance of the Caste system, in its ancient fourfold order, would do well to consider the advisability of getting rid of some of those restrictions which are indefensible on any ground of reason or religion, and which interpose rigid barriers between members of the same caste, preventing intermarriage and so on. Srî Sânkaràchàrya, the successor of the great Teacher of that name and the present head of the Sringeri Matha, has already declared himself in favour of marriages

between members of the same great caste who are separated only by the artificial walls of subdivisions. Such a reform would greatly strengthen the Caste system against its assailants, and it therefore deserves thoughtful consideration.

The next point is the building up of the entire Indian nation, by the encouragement of national feeling, by maintaining the traditional dress, ways of living, and so on, by promoting Indian arts and manufactures, by giving preference to Indian products over foreign. Now this is a point which really goes to the very root of Indian revival. Do not undervalue the importance of sentiment, and do not try to do away with everything which differentiates India from other lands; rather strive to maintain the immemorial customs and follow the immemorial traditions, instead of trying to look as little Hindûs as possible, as many of you are inclined to do. It is true, of course, that these are outside matters, but they have a very real effect on the generation and maintenance of national feeling. Take clothing and habits of life. There is no question that the Indian dress is the most suitable for the climate; it is healthy, it is beautiful; why then give it up? I know it cannot be worn while a man is

engaged in certain vocations, and that he is compelled to wear English clothes while working in offices where the dress of Western nations is compulsory. Now that is a thing which you cannot help; but what you can help is the not carrying on of these foreign clothes into private life: the Westernising of dress in the home as well as in the law-courts, in the home as well as in the office. This is not only folly, but a mistake as well. If Englishmen out here were wise they would adopt the Indian dress, instead of which we have Indians adopting the English dress at a possible risk to health. The Western man has to face a severer climate, and to bear a severer cold. In the Indian dress it would be utterly impossible to live in England, for men would simply die of the cold. But here, the wearing of English dress is simply absurd. There is nothing whatsoever to be said in favour of it, for it is absolutely ugly. If Englishmen would go back two hundred years and use the dress then worn, there would then at least be an artistic defence, for the dress then worn was beautiful, as compared with the peculiarly hideous clothing now worn, and which seems so much to attract the average young Indian mind. Now the matter is not simply a matter of sentiment; it is really a

matter of health, of convenience, and of economy; for the Indian dress is suited to the Indian climate, not only because it is light, but also because its material can go through water daily, and so is far more suitable to a hot country than the cloth coat and trousers which are worn unwashed over and over again. Considered as a mere question of hygiene in a hot climate, clothes which come into daily contact with water are eminently desirable. There is no reason, no common sense, which should make the Indian lay it aside, when the experience of thousands of years has shown it to be the best kind of dress for India. But it is not only that. The inner feeling and outer expression often go together, and he who Westernises his outside attire is very likely to grow Western *inside* as well, and therefore instead of strengthening he really tends to weaken his mother-land. Then again the question of economy comes in. Clothing which fifty years ago cost very little is now a serious drain upon the purse. Then, dress was simple, dignified without being costly, save among the wealthy and the ruling classes. Ordinarily it was a simple dress, which did not make any marked distinction between the rich and the poor in the *same*

caste, and was suited to the wants of the people. Suppose a man was learned but poor, he was not looked down upon for his simple dress, but in his pure white clothing he could make his way into every wealthy house in the land. Dress was not then, as it is to-day, a question of social appreciation; and the increase in expenditure upon it means a heavy addition to the already large burden on many families, in the ever-increasing struggle and competition brought into Eastern life by the adoption of Western methods. Again to the ordinary Hindû this Westernising process means a far greater demand upon him in other matters than that of clothing; for not only does it mean a change of dress, but it also means an increase in the number of meals, a change in their character, increase of wants in furniture, and so on, until, if you work it out, you will find that it means a greatly increased cost of living.

See the benefits I told you of yesterday, of simplicity of life. I did not mean asceticism by that. I did not mean to say that men of the world should lead the life of asceticism. I did not mean to say that men should live as *Yogis* in jungles or under trees, but I did mean that they should lead a

national, a simple, life with all the noble characteristics of the ancient times; that their houses should have the old simplicity and not be crowded over with a multiplicity of things of foreign manufacture.

And this leads me to the next point; namely, that it is the bounden duty of every patriotic Indian to encourage Indian art, Indian manufactures and Indian labour; and not to go across the seas to bring here endless manufactured articles, but to give work to his own people. Let all encourage Indian manufactures and arts, and use Indian-made goods in India. Indian art has gained a name all over the world because of its beauty and artistic finish, and why should men who have such art on their own soil, why should they go and buy the shoddy productions of Birmingham and Manchester? why should they cast aside the labour of their own countrymen? why should they purchase foreign goods instead of home-made, and encourage bad art instead of good? There is really no excuse for leaving Indian national art to perish, for this is an important thing in a nation's well-being, and especially the encouragement of all those forms of art which depend upon the delicacy of the human faculty, refine the people at large and increase

the material progress of the nation. Why, if you take some of the foreign manufactured goods and compare them with the Indian, what do you see? You find that in the Indian the colours are most delicately graduated and blended, giving an exquisite softness of shading to the Indian carpet, and this is the result of generations of physical training in the sense of colour; while in the carpet of foreign manufacture it is harsh and crude, and there is no need to print upon it "manufactured in Germany," for you have only to look at its colouring to know it is not Indian. You are therefore injuring your own beautiful national art by using inferior goods of foreign make, and extinguishing Indian trade by continuing to encourage foreign goods, to the impoverishment of India and to the throwing of Indians out of employment. Look also at the large prices the people in England are ready to pay for Indian art objects. I urge you, therefore, to support your own labourers, thus strengthening your manufactures and arts, and laying a sound material foundation for national wealth. The strengthening and developing of these Indian industries is the work to which Vaishyas should devote themselves, for that is the work essentially belonging to their caste, on which of

old the material welfare of the nation hung. You would also have coming to you constant demands from foreigners who purchase Indian goods because of their beauty. And we must press upon wealthy men that instead of sending to England to buy costly furniture, they should spend their money at home in encouraging the arts which are around them in their mother-land, so that a public opinion may be formed which would cry "shame" upon a prince or rajah who filled his palace with foreign articles instead of having them produced in his own country, so that his wealth should add to the comfort and happiness of the people and strengthen the national prosperity. These would awaken a sense of nationality, filtering down from the higher to the lower, regenerating the nation, and striking its roots deep down into the physical lives of the people, uniting all India, binding all India together closer and closer and closer, till her oneness is realised, till Indians recognise in themselves a people. See in the *Râmâyana* how all the arts and handicrafts flourished, and how prosperity and happiness abounded among the people on every side, for the masses need physical comfort; they are not developed to the point of finding wealth in *thought*. These ideas should appeal

to your reason and claim your judgment, for they are practical lines of working out a material regeneration, and deal with those concerns which the people at large can understand. The growing poverty of India is a matter you must reckon with, for you are already feeling the pressure of the struggle for existence, and that pressure must increase if you continue to feed its causes.

But remember that these physical means of regeneration cannot succeed unless they flow down as the lowest manifestations of the spiritual ideal that I have been setting before you, for they all have as aim the unifying of India, and that unifying must be founded on and permeated by a spiritual life, recognised as the supreme good, as the highest goal. Everything else is to subserve that, no matter how much material prosperity and wealth are needed for the encouragement of weak and undeveloped souls.

There is one other matter on which I must touch—the unification of religions, which can be done nowhere if it be impossible here. The glory of ancient Hindûism was its all-embracing character, its holding up of the perfect ideal, and yet its generous inclusion of all shades of thought. Under that wide tolerance, philosophies and religious sects

grew up and lived in amity side by side, and all phases of thought are found represented in the different Indian schools and the numerous Indian sects. This gives to Hindûism a unique position among the religions of the world. Therefore an effort should be made to draw into amicable relationship the religious bodies that went out from Hindûism, and have become oblivious of, or hostile to, the root whence they sprang. The Zoroastrians—the modern Parsis—have a noble and philosophical religion, holding the essential truths of all spiritual religion. This religion has become sadly materialised, and its adherents, in too many cases, have no idea of the deep meaning that underlies the ceremonies they so ignorantly perform. Alas ! this materialising process has affected the masses in all religions ; the more reason that the fundamental unity should be proclaimed by those who see spiritual truths, and that the daughters who have married into other families should not utterly forget their mother's home, but should recognise their descent and let love replace hatred.

And so with Buddhism. This also is a daughter of Hindûism, but at present the estrangement is too sharp, and has been caused very largely by misunderstandings. In the

Buddhism of Tibet and China the ancient traditions have been preserved, and the Hindû gods and goddesses are worshipped under other names—sometimes even under the same names. *Mantras* are used, *Japa* is performed, many religious rites are the same. And in the great philosophical system, but little known, which is expounded in the Abhidhamma (I am told), there is found the metaphysics and the spiritual profundity so deficient in popular Buddhism. Nor is it lacking on the esoteric, the occult, side; in the definite training of the Soul in Yoga. And the Siddhis are acquired by the Buddhist ascetic as by the Hindû. No division exists in that inner region. Why should it not be recognised that the Hindû social system, which is the chief point of difference, while invaluable as a type to the world, and to be maintained and cherished by all true Hindûs, is not suitable to many other nations, and that religious intolerance is no part of Hindûism? A true Hindû nation in its fourfold order would be the Brâhman of Humanity, the spiritual Teacher, the channel of Divine Life to the world. But other castes as well as the Brâhman are necessary in a nation, and other social forms as well as the Hindû are necessary in the world. If India could be regenerated,

if India could be purified, if India could be re-spiritualised, then the nation as a whole, with her spiritual faculties, her intellectual powers, her ideally perfect social organisation, would stand forth in the eyes of the world as the priest-people of Humanity, standing before the Gods in her collective capacity, fitted to be their mouthpiece to the world. That is the destiny to which India was appointed when she was peopled by the first men of the Fifth Race, and her religion and her social system were founded by the Rishis that she might serve as the model for that Race. Shall she ever again so serve? Shall she ever again rise from her present degradation, and fulfil the sublime charge laid in her hands? Who may pierce the darkness of the future? Who may read the scroll of destiny? This alone is sure, that no *other* future may be for her; that it is either this or death; and that it lies wholly with her children to give back to Humanity the India which may be the Saviour of Spirituality to the world.

The Place of Politics in the Life of a Nation

A Lecture delivered in 1895

I AM to try to speak to you this evening on Politics, its place, its possibilities: what can by politics be done, and also what cannot be done by it. Now I am going to try and sketch for you the work of the politician, the limit of politics and also its utility. I am going to try and show you how in this world changes are made, how in this world great reforms may come to be, how in this world there are laws which condition the reforms, there are laws which govern every possibility that lies in front of a nation; and in these days of confusion and unrest—days in which every man desires to do the work of another, days in which all duties are confused and you have a general attempt by each to do everything and so to do nothing well—in these days of confusion of duties and ignorance of powers, it may be well that in such a vast assemblage as this, gathered from every part of the mother-land

to speak her needs in the ears of the world, and to explain her wants so that all may understand; it may be well in such an assemblage that a voice should be heard that deals with principles more than with details, and tries to suggest the lines along which a nation may travel, and not only the various steps which, in the travelling, that nation may take. And so, I am going to suggest to you to-night, that in politics as in everything else, in the choice of political methods as in every other choice, a man needs sound thought to make right action; that unless there is a basis of philosophy for conduct, the conduct will be erratic and unsatisfactory. For I want, if I can, to show you this evening that the politician has his great and important place in the life of a nation; but that he does not stand alone, and that others also are necessary in order that national life and national work may be wisely carried on. I do this because I know time is wasted unless the principle of action is understood, and that if men live from hand to mouth in politics, just as if they live from hand to mouth in other spheres of activity, they may often for a momentary gain incur a serious danger, and judging by the things of the moment only may lose the very object that they really desire

to obtain. I am going therefore to try and show the principle underlying human action, the sequence of events in national as in individual life, the law in nature which cannot be violated.

In order that we may understand each other clearly let me begin by saying exactly what I mean by politics, what I include under political action, and therefore the place that political action, it seems to me, must fill in national life. I mean by "politics" every form of activity which is carried on in a particular geographical district, under a government of any kind that rules over that district, no matter what that government may be called—imperial or local, municipal or parliamentary. The point is: there is a certain geographical area governed by a particular body, and that body lays down rules of action which in the last resort have force to fall back upon to compel obedience. So that the characteristic of political action is that it has a particular geographical district in which it is carried on, a body that carries it on, and that lays down certain enactments for everyone who lives in the district, and then those enactments depend for their compulsory power not on argument, not on reasoning, not on voluntary action, not on

choice, but they rest ultimately on the basis of force, and obedience to them is compelled and not voluntary.

Now that is at least a very straightforward declaration as to what I mean to include in political action. If the Parliament of Great Britain passes a law, that law has sway over the district for which it is passed, and in the ultimate resort force will be used to compel obedience. If a despotic monarch rules over a state, everyone in the state may be compelled to obey his behests. I distinguish political action from voluntary action by the element of force that enters into the constitution of the former, and the fact that if you want to escape from the scope of the action you must leave the geographical district over which the political government has authority.

Having made, then, that definition for politics and political action, I pass to the next point in my argument: the constitution of society and the two great opposed ideas on which society may be built. Society may be built, and has been built for many a thousand years, in different parts of the world, on the idea that each man is part of a great organic whole, a society, and has certain duties that he is bound to discharge. Men in society have certain functions; men in society have certain

duties ; and many of the old fabrics of society especially are ordered by this idea of inherent duty based on the nature of a thing, on what is expressed by the word Dharma. It means the duty which each man has to perform, by virtue of his inborn nature. Each man has his own place, each man has his own duty in society ; the gathering together of all the vast varieties of men makes a society, and its welfare depends on the orderly discharge of duty, the perfect fulfilment of the function of each. Then there has arisen the idea, the idea that at the close of the last century swept all before it in the West, and on which was builded another type of society entirely differing in its fundamental thought. It was the notion of the rights of man. You find that in the great American Revolution there was a cry, the cry of those who threw off the English authority, the cry of the rights of man, that was emblazoned on their banners ; that was the cry underneath which they marched to war, and when the United States of America were founded, they were founded on the declaration of the rights of man, the right of liberty, the right of equality, the right of fraternity, and so on until the idea of rights became the fundamental conception of the nation, and the whole of that vast

republic to-day is built on this thought of the inherent rights of man. And then from America across the Atlantic the same idea swept into France, and in France gave birth to the Great Revolution, which changed the political state of the people; this was in the same way inspired by the notion of the rights of man. And so in England you find all through the present century that this cry of the rights of man has been the battle-cry of democracy, and out of this idea of the rights of man democracy has gradually arisen, and the leading nations of the West founded themselves on this notion of human rights. But lately, during the last few years, in the Western world there has come about from the teaching of Western science rather a revival of the olden idea that society should be based on duty more than on right, on the discharge of function more than on the self-assertion of the individual. For to take men as individuals, to disregard their functions to each other, to be careless about the duty that each owes to his brother, to study man as though he were alone instead of being part of a great human family—this is as though you were to take a heap of marbles on a table, and, taking up one marble, deduce from the condition of the marble that which you then

would apply to the heap to build it into a single whole. That idea of an isolated individual, who having rights of his own has a claim to assert them against everyone, and who is only bounded by the equal rights of everybody else, is an ideal of combat, an ideal of struggle of man against man, and of life against life; and no more can you gain an idea of a real society by taking a man separately, as though he were a marble and society a heap of marbles with no cohesion in them, you can no more do it and understand society, than you can tear from the living body one of its organs, and, studying the organ by itself, try to understand the working of the whole. For to understand the human body you must study it in life, in the functions, in the working of every part, in every single organ doing a particular work, not for its own gain but for the common good; and the nobler ideal that is spreading amongst men is that we live not to assert our rights but to do our duties, and so to make one mighty unity where each shall discharge his functions for the common good of all.

Now India is in this remarkable position, that from her own past she brings down the ideal of a system that is essentially founded

upon duty; but by the changes through which she has passed through many a century, passed long years ago, dating backwards and backwards and backwards to the earliest conquests that swept over her borders, India is to-day a strange compound of conflicting theories, of conflicting ideas, is a strange compound of an ancient nation ruled politically by a modern people. And the two ideas are here face to face. Both of them have many to support them. One, the old idea of duty, which would make the progress of the future pass always along the lines familiar in the past; and the other, urged by those who would take, as it were, the Western system completely, transport democracy from America and Great Britain into Indian soil, use the democratic methods, claim the democratic rights, employ here all the democratic organisation; not quite sure whether the soil will suit what is here an exotic, but forced by the necessities of the position to use some of the methods which are familiar in the hands of their rulers. For in a country like this where the masses of the people are of different languages, of different faiths, and different traditions from those who rule them, it is part of the necessity of the case that some amongst the people themselves should translate the popular

grievances and speak out the popular desires. It is necessary in order that justice may be done, it is necessary in order that a wise policy may be followed, that those who have the power should also be instructed in the knowledge of the wants of the people; and none can do that save those who belong to the people, who know the national desires and understand the methods along which those desires may be met. Therefore while, for my own part, I stand for the ideal of ancient India, and look on that as a thousandfold loftier than the mushroom civilisations that have grown up in later days, none the less am I bound to admit that we must deal with the country as we have it, and that where you are pushed into Western methods you must adapt your own methods somewhat, so as to meet the new conditions, so as to deal with the new ways of thought.

And now having made these as it were preliminary outlines, let me take the great division of functions which will underlie everything that I have to say. There are three great ways of influencing human life and human conduct: the first and the greatest of all is the work of the thinker, who by himself alone, face to face with the problems of life, uses all the powers that he has, and looking out into

air which is unbeclouded by the dust raised in the strifes of parties, deals with principle instead of detail, deals with essence instead of form, the thinker, he who gives out to the world some mighty thought. The world is not yet ready for it; the world is not yet able to understand or to accomplish it; for these are men born so great, they are men born so much above their fellows, that as though they sat on a mountain peak while other men are in the valleys, they see far over the country over which the average eye is unable to gaze. From the peak of great intellect, and still more of great spiritual insight, the Sage, the thinker, this mighty child of man, sees some supreme truth and proclaims it in the ears of the world. These are the great ones of our race, these are they who mould the future; these are they whose thoughts the lesser men accomplish by bringing down into action that which these mighty ones have thought. And from that realm of thought comes down everything that works in human society. Thought is the creative power, thought is the evolving and the moulding and the controlling force. As the great thinkers think, the world acts generations afterwards. Action is but for a day, thought is everlasting in its generating energy; and

therefore the greatest among the sons of men, Nature's most imperial children, are the thinkers; they are the ruling sovereigns of the world, they endure as long as human intelligence endures, mightier than all other monarchs, greater than all other conquerors, for their rule is bounded by no nationality, and knows nothing of geographical limitations.

Then from the sphere of thought there comes down a great idea into the sphere of discussion; no longer only in the mind of the thinker, no longer only in the Ashram of the Sage, but taught by lesser men to crowds of the people, till the thought of the thinker becomes popular amongst the minds of men. It passes from the stage of thought into the stage of discussion; it passes from the brain of the thinker to the lips of the teacher; and the teacher going out amongst his fellow-men and gathering masses of the people together uses all his power of brain, all his imaginative ability, all his skill of golden tongue and deftness of oratorical presentment, to popularise among these masses of the people that thought which was born in the brain of the thinker, and which by his work must become known to the minds of men. Thus the teacher going abroad popularises the great idea, until it begins to influence the minds of average men.

So that you have first the thinker and then the teacher—standing as types of the two great stages of thought and discussion that have to be realised before an action is performed. Then comes the third stage—action. The thought which men have now gathered from the lips of the teacher is to be brought into the common life of men, to make it better than it was before. The principle is to be applied to practice. The great thought is to become bread for the hungry, and drink for the thirsty, and shelter for the homeless, and defence for the oppressed. There is the work of the politician, there is the work of the actor. He applies to practice that which the thinker has thought, which the teacher has uttered, and he brings it down into the practical life of man, and makes the common lot happier and better by applying to the ordinary daily life the great thoughts and the teachings that have gone before. So that you will realise that these three stages of thought necessitate three types of men that carry them out. Among them the greatest of all is he who thinks. The second is he that teaches, and then comes the actor that applies the thought to life. Let me take an illustration which will show you clearly what I mean, and which in this country will rouse no kind of antagon-

ism of thought. There is a theory of life familiar in the West, known as Socialism. Many hundreds of years ago this idea of human brotherhood and of the assertion of the duties of man was taught by great thinkers, such as Plato, in the West, and they were regarded as dreamers, they were spoken of as Utopians, because the thought was too great for their generation, and their conception too mighty for the people to whom it first was told. Then came a stage when many took it up; hundreds and hundreds of years, nay, thousands of years afterwards; and then from lip to lip, from platform to platform, from pen to pen, there spread the teaching of human brotherhood and the duty of man to man, until at last it so touched the popular mind, until at last it so touched the popular conscience, that it found its way into the English Parliament, and even Sir William Harcourt—you may not know his name, but if you did you would know that he never stands up for impossible ideals that have not caught the popular fancy—Sir William Harcourt used a strange expression: "We are all socialists now." It did not mean much. It only meant that the principle of action which it was politic to adopt was that which aimed at the good of all and not at the advantage of a

class. Nothing more than that he meant by his careless phrase, but it marked the stage of action. This succession of stages will show you what I mean. First the thinker; then the many popularisers; and then the acceptance of the idea by the politician as a rule of political action.

Realising then that, let us also realise that all three are necessary. There should be no quarrel between the politician and the teacher, no quarrel between the politician and the thinker, no hostility decrying the one or the other, and wrangling as to the importance of the functions and the duties of each. Each is necessary to the other. Each is wanted by the other. The thinker is like the head, and without the head the body could not act; the politician is like the hands, and without the hands you could not have action though the brain should plan. Therefore they should be friends and not enemies, they should help each other and not be hostile in their work. To the thinker the great ideal which is to mould the future of the nation; to the teacher the setting forth of the ideal, that men's minds may be guided by it and their thoughts be shaped; to the politician the putting into action, into legislation, the great ideal thus conceived and taught—that is

the coherent progress in a nation where each duty is usefully and thoroughly discharged. But there should be no confusion between the functions. The thinker weakens his power if he mixes himself up with the strifes of political parties and with the details of political work. The thinker must remain in the serene atmosphere of thought, uninfluenced by the lower motives which needs must play on the men in the ordinary life of the world. Otherwise he will lose the clearness of his vision ; otherwise the atmosphere, dimmed with passion and with the fogs of human parties, will no longer be translucent, so that his eyes may see the essence of truth. Not in the dust of crowds, not in the dust made by the whirling wheels of chariot, of carriage and of cart, not there would you seek for clearness of vision. When you want to see far, far over the land, you go apart to a quiet mountain where the air is clear, where there is silence and not conflict ; and the thinker must be on the mountain of serenity, otherwise his thought will not be clear for the helping of man. Nor should the teacher be a politician ; for the teacher is to put the ideal before the eyes of men. No ideal can at once be put into complete practice, no ideal can be carried uninjured through the

struggles of a legislative assembly; for there the principle has to be whittled away, has to be subjected to compromise, has to be narrowed down, in order that it may get through the readings that a bill must pass through in Parliament, and so catch from all sides the votes without which it cannot possibly succeed. In politics you have thousands of men, every man thinking differently, and a majority must be gathered by compromise. Suppose every one of you had to vote on a proposition laid before you by one person; how he would reckon the votes, how carefully he would have to consider them, how he would go about to one here and one there, and say "Will you vote for me?" and one would answer: "Well, I agree with this much of your bill, but I don't agree with that other point; can't you drop the point that raises the discord, and carry the other part of the measure for which we are all ready to vote?" Compromise is a necessary part of political action, and you cannot avoid it. You must, when you are dealing with conflicting interests and the many minds of men, get something that the majority will agree upon; whether it be the best ideally or not, it is the best practicable thing. That is what the politician must

consider and ought to consider. For his work is to make the outer world better, and to deal with the things which are ready for action. Therefore every statesman must necessarily compromise, and statesmanship is skilful compromise; he must work step by step towards the ideal that he desires to attain. Therefore I say the teacher should never be a politician. Let him set up the ideal which politicians are to work towards; let him stand aloof, holding up the picture which is to attract the hearts of men. That ideal will be a long way off; there will be a rough road between the place where the people are standing and the place where the ideal is upheld; that road has to be trodden; there may be a river which has to be bridged; there may be a bog that has to be crossed; there may be a precipice that you have to avoid; there may be a wall over which you must climb. That is the work of the politician—to make the ideal ultimately realisable by going towards it. Step by step he must work in the right direction, and the ideal must be held up steadily, in order that the final direction may not be lost in the necessarily devious walking. Therefore is it that I, as Theosophist and teacher of principles, never mix in political detail nor take any share in these strifes of

warring parties; therefore the Theosophical Society to which I belong stands not as politician but as holder-up of ideals for every nation, for every party, for every man and every woman, no matter what the political systems or the political parties to which they may severally belong. Let me suppose for a moment that one man—to now use English names of parties—is a Radical, another man a Tory, a third man a Liberal, a fourth man a Socialist. Every one of these men may desire human progress, human happiness, increase of human prosperity, and growth of human power. They have a common ideal; they have separate ways of reaching it. In the Theosophical Society we hold up the ideal that they are to aim at, and leave each man to choose his own road and his own method of realising it, welcoming each man equally, whatever his party badge. As a politician he must choose his party, but as a Theosophist he only desires the supreme ideal, and then works towards that object by the best efforts of his brain.

And now let me go a step still further. Some of you are politicians. How are you going to choose your lines of advance? Has it ever struck you that the current of thought in a nation is that which is seen in the hopes,

the aspirations, the longings of the young? Not in the middle-aged men plunged in the work of life, not in the old men whose work is nearly over, but in the young ones of the nation, *there* is marked the line of national growth, and the ideals that touch them are the ideals that the future of the nation will embody. Therefore the far-seeing politician should watch what it is that moves most the young ones of his nation. Mind, they are often foolish, they are often headlong, they are often injudicious, they are full of passionate enthusiasm. Never mind. The world will tone down their enthusiasm fast enough, and they will not keep their headlong ways. Well if out of the enthusiasm of youth they keep something of noble hopes alive for middle age, and if out of the unselfish devotion of youth something remains to check the selfishness of the man of the world who has grown hard by contact with his fellow-men. Therefore I say, watch the young, for what moves them is a movement of the future, and if you want to legislate on lines that will last, see what is most touching the hearts of the young ones; for there is the future life of the people, there is what it will desire.

Now for a moment to come to more detail. There are some points that politicians have a

right to deal with, have a duty to deal with —the outer life of the nation. Politicians have the duty of dealing with, for instance, taxation, with the amount of taxation necessary, with the incidence of taxation on different classes of the people, the way in which taxes shall be gathered, and the manner in which the taxes shall be applied. For the whole of that is political work, and the man who would be a politician must study that dry side of politics, if he would be of use to his country. Then he should also deal with questions of the tenure of land, the conditions under which the land of the nation shall be held, the conditions under which it shall be cultivated, the amount of rent that it shall pay, the amount of burden of the State that shall fall upon it; he should deal with all questions of mortgage and usury, what the law will enforce and what the law will not enforce, so that the weaker may not be oppressed and the poorer cultivators and the miserable may not be in the grip of the money-lender and unable to rescue themselves from his hold. He should deal with the prevention of tyranny, with the conditions of labour, with the conditions of child employment, with the conditions of child education, so that here the strong conscience of the nation may guard its weaker

children, and may prevent any unfairness, may prevent any ill-usage of the young. He should deal also with the weaker classes, protecting those who are starving against undue pressure from those who would employ them, using their necessities as a measure of their payment, and careless of human happiness provided wealth be successfully wrung from them. He should deal also with what the law enforces as to contracts, what contracts the law will make binding on the citizens of the State, what contracts it will decline to enforce ; he should deal with the subordination of each to the common good, not allowing one man in the exercise of individual liberty to become a danger to his neighbours or a nuisance in the community. He should deal with the defence of the country from external attack ; he should deal with the administration of internal order, so that harmless men may live in peace and security under the ægis of the political government. He should control all methods of communication, internal communication, and if the people are taxed in order that these may be made, in order that railways may be completed and land may be surveyed for the laying down of the iron roads, then those railways should be made for the good of the people and for the

benefit of the whole community, and should be planned out to serve the nation for the general use of the whole. It should not possibly be that within the limits of a nation, where there are railways supported out of the moneys paid by the people, there should be vast stores of rice in one part of the country and thousands of starving people in another, and no communication to bring the two together so that the starving may be fed. These are the questions which the politician must deal with. These are the questions which the politician is bound to consider; and he fails in his duty unless he takes these in hand and represents what should be done about them to the Government of the country, so that prosperity may increase. To put the case in a nutshell: these duties of the politician are what were in olden days the duties of the Kshattriya, the great caste in the old days that had all these political duties in hand. That was the great body in the olden time that had this charge in the State, and was bound to administer it for the common good.

But your politician will fail in everything that he attempts, your politician will break down in every effort he makes, unless he has thought behind him, which renders permanent the changes that his action brings about. It

is no use to make a law and then find the law inoperative, it is no use to make a change and find the old conditions returning under a new name, and that your work is wasted because the thought of the thinker is not behind it. Again let me take an illustration. In England we have a thing we call sweating. Sweating means that if I, a woman, am starving, and if I go and try with a needle to earn enough to get bread and shelter and clothing, that as I am very hungry, I ask very little for my labour, and the pressure of my hunger is made the measure of my payment and not the value of the work I do. In the London that I know so well, there are hundreds and thousands of women working for their bread, and working for eighteen hours out of the twenty-four, to earn enough merely to keep themselves alive, constantly hungry, constantly suffering, never knowing what it is to have enough to eat, and out of their incessant labour just managing to keep body and soul together; and then what they have made, when driven by starvation, is taken by the sweater, and is sold in the shops mostly at a low price, that even then brings a large profit, while those who made it are nearly dying of starvation. Oh! you may say, the sweater is a scoundrel. Are you so sure that the

fault is his? The real fault is in the heart of men and women who are tolerably comfortably off, who have money enough and to spare, and who want to buy things more cheaply than they can be fairly sold at, and demand things at a price that cannot give a living wage. The blame is not with the sweater; he is the instrument that carries out the desire of ladies and gentlemen who are comfortably off, but who like to get a little more than they give and to get a little the better of their neighbours. So long as their desire exists, and as long as you and I and others want to take advantage of our brother's needs, so long may politicians enact laws against sweating every day of their lives, but sweating will continue in society, because men desire to gain and care not for brotherly love. And thus it is that we find the politician limited. He may make a good law, but if the people are bad the good law is useless. He may make an improvement in outside shape, but if the people are unworthy of it the old evils return despite the new shape he has made. Therefore is it that you need the *teacher*; therefore is it that you need the *thinker*; and only where they are at work in a nation, making noble ideals that purify the heart, only there will the politician be suc-

cessful and the progress of the nation be secured.

And now for a moment let me speak to you on this question of ideal. This question will decide the future of India, and either lead her to her death or to her rising again amid the nations of the world. You are claiming political power, you are claiming political advance, and political representation. To what end are you going to use it, what purpose have you before your minds as to the national ideal that you desire to accomplish, the ideal that no politics can make but can only work for? It is the ideal that makes the politics and not the politics the ideal. Let us then see—for hereon depends the life of the nation; here comes in the question whether we shall live or die, whether we shall survive or perish, whether the history of India is here to have an ending or a revival till she is as glorious as in the olden days. How shall you learn? By studying, by looking at the world around you and then using your best intelligence and judging what you see. The great nation that is spreading over the world and that has its home in Great Britain, that great English people, has two children in the world, both growing into mighty nations. One of her

children is America, making the United States. Another of her children, the younger one, is Australasia, Australia and New Zealand, where a vast nation is building. The thought of England influences you more than the thought of any other people; the thought of the Anglo-Saxon race is the thought that goes throughout the length and breadth of our land, that fascinates our young men with its science, that fascinates the ambitious with politics, that fascinates all the men who love pleasure with the delights of its luxurious civilisation, and that stamps itself upon you in your clothes, in your thoughts, in your houses, in your methods of living, in your horses, carriages and everything. Go back a hundred years and compare India then with India now, and you will see what I mean when I say that the English thought is dominating the nation and is impressing itself on all the habits of the people. If that be so—and that is unquestionably so—if that be so, you had better study it where it has long been ruling, and judge for yourselves whether the ideal is the best ideal for you to take when you are trying to build a new national life, and start in a definite national direction. England, the oldest of the three countries that I have

named, great in her science, great in the power of her sword, a small nation geographically, one of the greatest nations in her ruling power, that nation within the limits of her own borders stands amongst the nations of the world remarkable for this — the extremes of wealth and poverty that divide her people. London is the metropolis of the British Empire, London is the centre where all her glory is gathered, where her wealth is seen at its greatest, where her magnificence is best to be estimated. Your young men go and see the glitter of her wealth, they see the luxuriance of her civilisation. In London, the metropolis of the Empire, is gathered up as it were the ideal of the British nation, and just as you find the luxury which goes beyond anything else that the world is able to show, you see also a poverty so horrible that no other land can show its match. I know it. Why? Because my duty has lain there, because I have served on bodies that had to deal with the poverty of the people and the misery of this massed population; because in the School Board of London my own district was one of the poorest in London, that terrible East End of which you may sometimes have heard, but of which you have heard too little so long as you

are dazzled with the glitter of Western civilisation: starving children, starving men, starving women, thousands upon thousands of them, day by day face to face with enormous wealth, so that the contrast is so bitter that every now and then you hear whisper of riot, whisper of revolution, whisper of thrown bombs and charging police; so that in the very centre of her home there is danger, because of the wealth and the poverty that stand face to face against each other. Leave Great Britain and go to America: what there do you find? You find that there rank is given by wealth; the man who yesterday was a worker on a railway, by clever speculation, by ingenious playing and gambling on the Stock Exchange, by getting news before his neighbours and using it, so that when the loss is coming he may transfer the depreciated stock to his neighbour's pocket and save himself from the danger. Study America, where the penniless workman of this year may be the millionaire of twenty years hence; America where wealth is the title to honour and wealth is the road to power. Not learning, not wisdom, not refinement, not courtesy, not careful thought, not self-sacrifice for human good, but money; where one man

has so much wealth that, unable to spend it, he makes a golden cradle for his baby while other men starve in the streets for want of food. What must be the inevitable result? America is now well-nigh in the throes of civil war, of a labour war, the most cruel and the most brutal of conflicts. You hear of thousands of men marching across the States, and crying out for work or for bread, and for some change in the condition of society. For to make money the title to honour is the most vulgar of all civilisations, the most petty of all ideals, the most degrading object a man can put before his fellow-men.

And then if you go to Australasia what there do you find? I have just come back from it. I find material wealth abundant. I find comfort, rough indeed but plentiful, and I find they are seeking everywhere for wealth and pleasure. Everywhere gambling, everywhere racing, everywhere irreverence; and they are developing a peculiar type of young man, that is a special growth of the Colonies, that they call the Larrikin—having invented a name for him—a youth who grows up without religion, without reverence for age, without sense of responsibility, who lives only for pleasure, for drink and for gambling, and these are growing up by

thousands in the midst of that young civilisation. Why are all these nations in difficulty? Why are they in conflict? Why, when you go to Great Britain, to America, or to Australia, do you find these signs which are evil signs, that are not the signs of growth but of decay? It is because they have chosen a material ideal of wealth, honour, rank, power, all the things that men struggle for against each other, and about which each man in gaining must disappoint his fellow-men. There is wealth indeed, but they scramble for the wealth; there is luxury, but they are always multiplying their wants.

There are two great ideals one over against the other, either of which a nation may choose. One of these is material wealth and increase of physical wants, and the gratification of those wants ever more and more; and the other is the knowledge of the intellect, is the wealth of wisdom, is the growth of art, is the cultivation of beauty, is the realising of man's higher nature. Art, science, and intellect become the handmaids of the Spirit, so that the ideal is spiritual and not material, enduring and not transitory.

Which shall India choose? There is the point to which I have been leading. There is the point to which the whole of my thought

has been directed. On the one side material advancement, on the other side spiritual growth; India between them, looking longingly towards the material wealth and the material luxury, but held back by an instinct that comes from the Spirit within her, that that is not the road to perfection, that that is not worthy of India's choice. And I will tell you why: As long as your ideal is material it is limited, and therefore conflict must arise. As long as your ideal is material it is repeatedly gratified, and then ever new gratifications are craved for, more and more; there is multiplication of wants and multiplication of satisfactions. What is the result? If I had here on this table a heap of gold, if I said, "I will give this gold to you," you know what would happen—the scrambling and the rush and the conflict, and one man climbing over the other, and the strong pushing the weaker aside, a rush and a fight and a miserable struggle. Why? Because the gold is limited, and if a man does not get to the front before it is all gone, he will be left without a coin, and his neighbours in front will have gained it all. But if I have spiritual wisdom to give and stand here for the giving, there is no need to fight, there is no need to quarrel, there is no need to be anxious to get in front

lest it should all be gone; for while the material wastes in the using, the spiritual grows in the giving, and every man who finds a new truth and gives it to the world, makes everyone who hears him the richer for the hearing and yet remains himself richer than he was before. For if I bring you some great truth, I know it all the better when I have shared it with you; I have not lost it because I have spoken it; it has become more real to me than it was before I spoke. I the giver and you the takers are all the richer for the common sharing; and that is the glory of the intellect and the Spirit, that the more their treasures are shared the more they grow, and the more widely they are spread the more complete is the satisfaction. The desires of the intellect, the desires of the heart, the desires of the Spirit, these are increased as they are fed and they remain ever as a source of joy and not of conflict. So that if you choose the material ideal you choose strife, struggle, poverty, dissatisfaction, unrest and final death; whereas if you choose the spiritual you choose a peace that is ever growing, power that is ever increasing, strength that knows no diminution, and immortality of life. Which do you choose?

Once there was a day when in India wealth

was not the greatest thing, when in India rank was not the greatest thing, when the king was not so great as the spiritual teacher, and the half-naked Sage was more honoured than the wealthiest of the princes. That was the day that made India what she is in the eyes of the world ; for all the world is reading Indian books, and studying Indian literature, and discussing Indian philosophy ; and though the West has conquered your bodies, your thoughts are conquering its mind. That is a mightier triumph, a greater conquest than any sword can give ; and to-day again you have your choice, either to choose the greatest and the lasting, or to choose the impermanent, the transitory. And so I appeal to you : you have brains amongst you, subtle, keen and strong ; you have intellect amongst you, mighty and great both in thought and in power of expression ; you have oratory amongst you as splendid as that which any nation can boast, tongues as golden in the beauty of linked syllables as any tongues that the world has heard, that the past has known. Are they all for the transitory, and are there none for the permanent ? Are they all for the wealth of the body, and none for the helping of the mind ? Are all the brightest brains to go into law,

into civil service, into politics, and leave only the second- and third-rate to deal with the mighty questions that move the minds of men in every time and every nation. I claim for India—not the India of material wealth, but the India who was the mother of spiritual knowledge—I claim for her some of the brains of her greatest children, some of the noblest intellects, some of the purest lives, some of the most skilful tongues, some of the grandest thinkers. They are all attracted by the glitter of gold, attracted by ambition, by desire to excel, attracted by the toys that are worthy of children. But I, who love India as my own, for she is mine, India with whom all my hopes of the future and my memories of the past are bound up, this India that is so great and yet so little, so mighty and yet so poor—I claim from the children that come from the womb of India that there shall be some worthy of the past, that there shall be some worthy of their mother, that there shall be some who shall give her what she asks, thought, philosophy, literature, science, the great things that she loves, and not merely the struggles of parties and the questions that divide politicians. Some of the better brains should do this work, some of the abler tongues should

preach it. I have told you the place for the politician, but some place is needed for the teacher and some for the thinker. I plead to the young among you, who have not yet chosen their path in life, whose hearts are still soft and whose hopes are still pure. Turn aside from the struggles of the bar, turn aside from the examinations of the colleges, turn aside from the hopes of civil service, and the employment that is paid for with gold; give yourselves to the motherland, give yourselves to her help, give yourselves to her redemption; let politics be followed by some, not by all; but let not the other be forgotten, since it is the more important thing. For politics will perish, but thought remains. If you had only a political past, no one in the West would care for you to-day. Will you not give to the future what the past has given to you? Will you not hand on to the generations to come some addition to the treasures that the generations of the past have bequeathed to you? There are so many nations that are political, so many nations that are wealthy, so many nations that in the Western sense are great. There is only one nation the world knows that may still choose the Spirit instead of the body, and spiritual knowledge rather than

material gain—only one nation amongst all the nations of the world, only one people amongst all the peoples of the globe. That nation is India, that people the Indian people; and if you, the last hope of the spiritual life of man, if you give everything to matter, then in your apostasy the world is betrayed, and in your spiritual death humanity shall find its grave.

Anniversary Address

Reprinted from "The Theosophist," February 1900

BROTHERS,—Before entering on the lines of thought along which I shall ask you for a brief space of time to follow me to-night, I feel moved at first to one or two words of sympathy for the speakers who have preceded me, and also for myself in the way that the first speaker suggested as to the wrong they have sustained at the hands of our Chairman. It is very hard to sit still to hear one gentleman complimented for his keenness in science and another for splendour of devotion and self-sacrifice and so on, from one to another, until the climax was reached when our President said of myself that my voice was to follow his and that he would therefore stand aside. I would like to say on my own behalf, and that of my fellow-speakers, that it may be well for the elders to remember that their place among men and in men's hearts can never be taken away by any nor occupied by the younger in the movement whose duty has led them to take a leading part; and I would say to the President-

Founder that twenty-four years of service weigh more heavily in the scale of love and justice, than any words, however eloquent and mighty, spoken by the younger members. His silent deeds are far more valuable than eloquent words. Coming again amongst you from Western lands, it seems to me that some words on the movement may fitly open what I have to say to-night. There are two points of interest during last year's work in Europe in connection with this movement which merit attention and arouse feelings of gladness and gratitude. It has been shown that from the East have been drawn the many doctrines of the later and younger religions, and no Christian can now attack the religion of the East without weakening the claims of his own faith to the attention and to the listening ears of men. A change is coming over the public mind in the West, and they find that some of the leaders of Christian thought declare in plain and clear words that the ancient religions of the world are to be regarded with respect, and not to be spoken of with mockery, with hatred, with bitter opposition, and that all religions have the same goal, the same aim at the end of the road they travel. That was one of the changes that was clearly seen; one in which

the Theosophical Society has led the way. Another is the strange and significant fact that the last Oriental Congress—the Congress in which Oriental thought is studied, Oriental religions represented, Oriental literature exalted, Oriental views of life discussed — that that Oriental Congress was this year held in Rome; Rome, that has been the great capital of the Christian world; Rome, where but a brief time ago no voice might be heard save in submission to a single Church; Rome, that for many centuries was known as the opponent of every form of religious thought except her own: Rome opened her arms to the Oriental Congress, and the thought of the East found currency under the very shadow of the Church of the Vicar of Christ. One result of that Congress might perhaps interest you in a fashion yet more personal. It happened that at one of the meetings a well-known Theosophist spoke, tracing back to Eastern thought and to India, as the cradle of religions, many of those mystic Secret Societies which carried on the torch of knowledge through the darkness of the Middle Ages. So much interest was roused by what was said, so much interest was shown by Italian professors of literature and science in the line of thought thus opened

out, that, asking to hear more of the teaching, asking to learn something more of this ancient Eastern wisdom, they are now welcoming in their midst one of your own countrymen, a young Brâhman, — Jagadisha Chandra Chatterji, and he is now in Rome, addressing lectures to the professors there on Eastern thought, spreading ideas of the Vedânta among those who are most learned in the society of Rome. These two points, it seems to me, mark out the progress which has been made in the penetration of Western minds by Eastern thought. When we come over to the mother-land of that thought, what should we expect to find? As your thought spreads in Europe and the sublimity of the ancient teaching becomes more and more known; as in the centres of Western intelligence and Western learning the names of the Rishis of antiquity become household words, and men repeat their sayings as crystallising the noblest human thought; as this is happening, the eyes of the West are turning more and more to the India of to-day, and they are asking, "What will be given us by those men who boast themselves the descendants of the Rishis? Shall we find in India a nobler religion? Shall we find in India a loftier spirituality? Shall we find in India a purer

ethic and a greater morality? Is modern India worthy of ancient India, and are the men in whose physical veins runs the blood of the Rishis fit representatives of those mighty beings? Do they show the Rishis' thought, the Rishis' devotion, the Rishis' spirituality, the Rishis' superiority to the transient joys of the earth?" What answer does modern India give to the question that is now coming from the West with ever-increasing force? What answer in life, in literature, in religion, is to be sent back to the questioners in Western lands? Are they, when they come here with their minds full of noble ideas learnt out of ancient books, are they to be greeted with a copy of their own civilisation and a second-hand repetition of the words, of the thoughts and of the manners, with which they have been wearied in the West? If so, they will return disillusioned from this ancient country and declare that, while it may be great to be the physical descendants of the Rishis, it would be greater to be the sons of their mind, of their thought, of their life, their devotion and their spirituality, and set the old example to the world instead of merely copying the phases of modern civilisation. So that as your literature wins the attention of the Western world, it becomes

very necessary that you should show out the virtues of the ancient world, and that they be seen to flourish in the modern soil; that Indian learning, Indian purity, Indian ethics shall be justified by the present as well as glorified in the past. For there is a danger, my brothers, that the modern Indian may shelter himself under the name of the Rishis, that he may do nothing to justify his ancestry, and go to sleep, as it were, lulled by the music of antiquity, and care not to reproduce that music in his own narrower and smaller life. If that sad fate is to be avoided, it is chiefly to the younger that we must turn. Men who are living in the world with the heavy cares of family upon them, with all the burden of modern life pressing them down; forced by the bitter conflict of modern competition, whether they will or not, into the current of modern ways and modern ideas of life, those men do well if in their hearts they keep alive the flame of life, keep but the faith in the ancient religion, even if by force of circumstances they are unable to reproduce in themselves that which made the country mighty in the past. But is it not possible that out of the children, the boys, the youths, we may build a future not wholly unworthy to name itself the son of the past, the heir

of Indian antiquity? May it not be that, taking the young and plastic minds, we may fill them with such love of Indian thought, such knowledge of the Indian past, such realisation of the greatness of the Hindû faith, such a devotion to the ideals of Hindû life, that they may be permeated in every fibre with love of their country, with a knowledge of their past to be worked out in the future that lies before them? Can we not make them proud to be Indians of to-day, glad to be sons of a mighty mother whose children in the past made the world wonder? Why should they not be born again amongst us? And it is because in the young there is most hope, because the future of a nation is in the young and not in the old—it is for that that we who work for your rising in the scale of nations have initiated the educational movement of which the college at Benares is but the first fine seed. Give us your boys while they are young and while they are plastic. Let us teach them Hindû ideals, let us teach them Indian history, Indian literature and Indian customs, in fact all that makes a real nation, and then the boundaries that separate may disappear and we may have one mighty people stretching from Tuticorin in the south to the Himâlayas on the north. This belief

in India's future is the very groundwork on which we are basing our activity, and I could not but feel at once glad and touched when, from one South Indian district—South Canara—there came a gift of money largely contributed by Hindû ladies, who knew that religion would be aided by the movement that is going on in Benares. They have sent us the money with the request that in some way their names as lovers and helpers might be commemorated in Kasi itself, and one of the rooms that is now building will have in it a tablet "Built by friends in South Canara," so that for all time to come the love of the South may be commemorated in that fashion, and it may be seen that North and South are joining in the religious education of India's sons. . . . . India can never again be great, save as she is religious; India can never again be great, save as she gains the spirituality that she has lost. If she can win that back, then behind it will come all other things, intellectual power, and material wealth, and all the lower things that enter into the growth of national life. But one charge has she received from the Highest; one duty that, undischarged, weighs her down to the ground but, that discharged, will lift her again a light and beacon in the eyes of men,

and that is to be the safeguard, above all things, of religion and truth, and to wed spiritual philosophy to the devotion of a noble religion. If that great work is taken up and carried out, everything else will follow in its train; if it is sought after, all other things that are good will come to you as its inevitable successors. Your mother India is appealing day by day and year by year. Often I think that, during these years of the Kaliyuga, she has gone away into some far-off region to wait there until her children call her back; for how shall she, mother and Guru of the world, from whose past have grown the world's philosophies, the world's religions, the world's sublimest teachings—how shall she come and dwell in a land that forgets religion and philosophy, and plays with the toys of children instead of realising the aims of men? She often bows in worship to the Great Ones who watch, far off on the Himâlayan peaks, all the pitfalls in the way of the child they love. I seem to think that India, our mother, is standing there in the midst of this circle of the Rishis, waiting for the time when she can descend again and illuminate the child she loves. And what shall bring her? What brings the mother hastening homeward? The thought that

her children are crying for her in her absence. What brings her quickly to the room where the babe is lying? The wailing of the babe that seeks food from the mother's breast. The mother who loves the child cannot stay away, if the child desires her presence. But sometimes the child in carelessness, needing nothing for the moment, will run away to play with its playmates in the street, forgetful of mother, forgetful of home, and forgetful of all that the mother means to do. But presently the child will grow hungry, presently the child will grow tired, presently the child will be thirsty and weary, and then he will remember the mother and turn back his steps with the cry of "Mother" on his lips. And the mother knows it all the time and says, in the words of an Indian poet that come to my mind, "Babe, though you may go away from me in the hours of play, hunger and thirst will soon bring you back again to my arms." Sometimes I think that India, the mother, is only waiting patiently, contentedly enough in the wisdom of her mother's love, seeing her children playing in the streets with the toys and follies of the little child; waiting till hunger for spiritual knowledge and thirst for spiritual teachings shall send the children clamouring home with the cry for mother on

their lips. I hear in my dreams that cry rising from the Indian land ; I see in my dreams child after child weary of the play in the street, and thinking of turning homeward where the mother's arms are waiting. Looking upwards, I see on her face a smile, the smile of mother's love waiting to welcome her truants home again. I know that soon there will rise from the whole of India the one mighty cry, "O India our mother ; mother and Guru of the world, come back amongst us once again ! Come home !"

Theosophy and Imperialism

A Lecture delivered in 1902

FRIENDS: In the midst of the tumult of national pageantry, in the midst of the intoxication of a peace made after a long and wearying war,[1] there seems to be some danger lest the people, carried away too much by passion, moved too much by the thought of the triumph of the moment, should lose sight of the deeper truths, of the deeper realities, that must underlie all permanent national greatness. And it seemed to me that perhaps it might be well in such a moment to try to lead the question out of the strife of warring parties, out of the struggle of contending personalities, and look at the doctrine of Empire in the light of a world theory, of a view of life which takes human evolution as a whole and regards it from a high and impartial standpoint; that we might do well to raise ourselves above the immediate questions of the moment, and see whether we understand clearly the direction in which we desire to go, whether we realise the conditions of permanent

[1] The war in South Africa had just been concluded.

national greatness, whether we see that it resides not in the force that conquers but in the justice that protects, and that no Empire can be great unless that Empire be founded on brotherhood, on righteousness and on truth.

I want to say at the very outset that in joining together the two names Theosophy and Imperialism I desire to convey the idea that I shall try to put the question of Imperialism before you in what, to some of us, seems the real and spiritual light. The facts on which my theory will be based are those which are accepted by the ever-increasing number of thoughtful people who take the name of Theosophist, but the deductions that I draw from the facts are my own, and ought not to be held to commit others to their acceptance; none save myself is responsible for that which I here put forward. While we should all be agreed upon the facts, there may well be differences in the deductions that are drawn from those facts, and the deductions, as I say, are my own. I am going to try to put the matter before you as I see it, looking at the wide course of events, leaving you to judge whether that view be true or false, whether it will conduce to national greatness, or whether it should lie outside the national thought.

Now, looking at the course of the evolution of the races of the world in the light of Theosophy, we see certain facts that stand strongly and clearly out: we see that the evolution of races, like the evolution of persons, passes through various cycles of growth, maturity and decay, and that you must look at the life of races as you look at the life of persons; that the story of a life born into the world, growing and developing, reaching its maturity, wielding power, and then slowly decaying, passing away, giving place to another, is true of the races of mankind, and that the study of the races in the past may guide us in our forecast as to the *rôle* of a race in the present. And we notice, as we look backward, that each great division of the human race, each strongly marked type of racial character, has its own growth and development, its time of widespread Empire, and then again its time of slow and gradual decay. We see that one race after another has come to the front, has conquered, has ruled, has built up a great world Empire, and then gradually again has passed away. And studying those facts of the past, we see that they go hand in hand with great religious movements, with great spiritual impulses, and that wherever you find a new departure in

spiritual matters there you find it succeeded by a new departure in rule and in civilising power.

We look back into the dim past and we find the rising up of a great Eastern religion, the religion that still rules in India, and we find the growth and the spread of that religion moulding slowly a mighty race into imperial magnificence, so that the rulers of that continent spread their sway far and wide over surrounding nations. Then we find a new impetus given to religious thought, and the great prophet Zarathustra comes out from the cradle of the Âryan race in midmost Asia, and preaches his view of life and conduct; under the shadow of that teaching, under the moulding influence of that mighty prophet, the Iranian civilisation develops, and the Persian Empire rises. Coming further westward we see how the same thing had previously taken place in Egypt, and how the Egyptian faith shaped and moulded Egyptian civilisation and gave in the Pharaoh the priest-monarch of the Empire, which again by war-like conquest spread its influence over neighbouring lands. And again, we notice the same thing in later days, when the great republic of Rome was founded, when its armies conquered on every side, and later its

Empire arose. And through the last few hundred years, since the Christian era, we see the great Christian impulse given to the spiritual life of the world, and under that influence there has arisen a new type of civilisation, but not yet a world-wide Empire. It seems as though attempts had been made but had not succeeded. Most marked of all these was the rising of the Spanish people, which at one time bade fair to extend its Empire to the limits of a world-wide Power. But inasmuch as Spain in her conquests did not regard mercy and duty, inasmuch as when she made a race subject to her sceptre she ruled that race for her own gain and not for the good of the people that she conquered, inasmuch as she enslaved the conquered races and made them toil for Spanish wealth, made them labour for Spanish profit, made them struggle and die for the exaltation of Spain, and cared nothing for their own good nor for their own raising ; therefore on the dawning Empire of Spain, the first of the European nations that had manifestly offered to her the great gift, the great trust of a world-wide Empire, across that dawning Empire was written by the finger of Providence, "Tried and found wanting in the trial." Therefore, the Empire that had dawned perished ere it

reached its meridian, and Spain has sunk lower and lower because she had proved unworthy to bear the heavy burden of the Empire that was within her grasp.

Time went on, and again an effort was to be made to see whether in the midst of the European civilisation a people could be found ripe to bear the burden of Empire, and ready to sway a world-wide power for the benefit of the nations that it ruled, for the education of the conquered peoples, and Britain finds herself to-day at what we may call the crisis of a national choice. Britain has conquered as Spain once conquered; Britain has been spreading her power further than Spain had dreamt. Over her head to-day there hovers the imperial circlet of a world-wide Empire. Will Britain be mighty enough for the task which is laid before her? Will she succeed in moulding a world-wide Empire which shall be not an enslaver of the world, but a helper, a teacher, an upholder, a guide unto a nobler civilisation, and will she realise that the burden of Empire, while on one side it is a burden of glory, is on the other side a burden of responsibility, a mighty trust, an imperial duty, which God may offer to a nation of the world, but which He will not allow that nation to hold unless the trust be worthily discharged,

unless the responsibilities be nobly and righteously borne?

That, it seems to me, is the question that lies before us to-day. In all parts of the world the British power is growing and expanding, the British tongue is spreading. Now it is to us Theosophists significant and interesting that the bulk of the Souls to whom this offer is made have twice before builded an Empire and have carried its burden; for the majority of the Souls that made the Egyptian Empire lived again upon earth in the Roman Republic and Empire, and have been and are being born into the Anglo-Saxon, and indeed into the whole Teutonic race. Men who wrought in the Rome on the Tiber are working now in the Rome on the Thames, and are again Empire-building. We have old Empire-builders among our generals and our statesmen, and even outside their ranks. Such Souls are born into nations to whom the Divine Ruler holds out the diadem of Empire, and their strong hands and piercing eyes are British hands and eyes to-day.

But ere we reckon up the component parts of the coming Empire, let us voice a greeting and a hope for a growing people who should be with us, who share with us a common

ancestry, a common history. They may have an Empire of their own in the far future, but they might join with us in the nearer, the dawning, day of toil. Over the Atlantic there is a mighty nation sprung from the British race, that should bear part of this burden of Empire, but is unhappily separated from us by the blunders committed more than a century and a quarter ago; is it not possible, even yet, that it should at least form part of a world-wide Federation of all British-speaking peoples, even if it refuse to be within the circle of the Empire, as it would have been had it not been for the mistakes made by Britain towards the close of the eighteenth century? For here is a people to whom Britain needs to draw nearer and nearer, closer and closer, so that although one Crown at present does not bind them together, the blood tie and the tie of the common past may draw them into straiter union, and that if the world Empire should come the American State may form a real part of it, even if technically outside it, not aliens, but brothers, in bearing that heavy burden of rule.

In America there is also a greatly-growing people sprung from Britain's loins, shaping the destinies of the strong Canadian State, happily an integral part of Britain beyond

the seas. In Canada a nation is evolving to form one of the pillars in the edifice of the world Empire, with a vast extent of territory with ever-multiplying sons, as apt in agriculture as they are apt in war, as industrious in the wheat-field as they are gallant in the battle-field, uniting the solidity of the farmer with the dash of the warrior. There is the granary of the Empire, the food-supplier of the future; and imperial insight would draw Canada nearer to the mother-land by the swiftest steamers that modern skill can build, and aid by subsidies an ocean line as profitable in peace as it would be invaluable in war. Every tie that sympathy can inspire and that statesmanship can plan should bind Britain and Canada together, ties of community in interests, in commerce, in public work, as well as the tie of loyalty to a common Imperial Crown.

Growing up in the southern Pacific we see another child of Britain, the young and stalwart Australian Federation, and the fair island of New Zealand. There Britain sees another Britain growing into lusty youth, having avoided the blunders which rent the American colonies from her side, and their eyes that have never seen the mother-land yet fondly look to her as "Home."

It is not in connection with these parts of the Empire that the imperial instinct of the British peoples in the British Isles and in Greater Britain will be tested. These are all in process of natural and healthy growth, component parts of the Empire, its limbs and organs. Two countries are there by which Britain will be tested, two lands by which her genius for Empire will be decided—one is South Africa, where a devastating war has closed; the other is India, her vast dependency, where she rules three hundred millions of human beings.

In South Africa we have seen the wrath, the ambition, the sins of men, turned to world-purposes and lofty ends by the Ruler who guides the destinies of nations. Common sacrifices, common losses, common triumphs, have made Britain and Greater Britain one. Strenuous struggles, hard-fought battles, prolonged wrestlings, have taught Briton and Boer to respect each other, have wiped out past memories that made for misunderstandings, and thus have paved the way to an enduring peace. But can the victor show the patience, the strength, the insight, to turn the foe into a friend, to satisfy all legitimate demands, to wait for cordial loyalty till bitter memories die a slow and natural death? Can

he make one nation of the jarring elements, and blend victor and vanquished into citizens? And can he, at the same time, hold under strong and firm control the savage tribes that dwell among and around the European-African nation, and enforce discipline without ferocity, labour without cruelty, order without oppression? Here truly will the genius for Empire be tested; here will the decision of the future be partly made.

We turn eastwards, and see the vast dependency of India, where the final decision of the future rests; ere we study it, let us note and remember the changed conditions which surround this dawning Empire when compared with the Empires of the past.

In the old days, the weight and the responsibility of Empire lay on the head of the Empire, the ruling Monarch, and on the Council that immediately surrounded him. The Empire was great as the Emperor was great; the Empire was well ruled as the Emperor was worthy of his task; but in modern days the world Empire which is now dawning upon us, this new world Empire which may be mightier than any Empire of the past has been, this Empire for the first time in the history of humanity depends less on the central figure that wears the Crown

than it does on the vast masses of its people; for the power has largely passed into the hands of the nations, and with them will chiefly lie the decision of the policy and of the work of the Empire. That being so, and that it is so is of course beyond discussion, the question comes at once before us: Are these people worthy of Empire, have they the power, the self-denial, the consciousness of duty which alone can make them worthy of imperial rule spreading around the world? Do they want to be an imperial nation because of the pride and the glory, the glitter and the show of the pageantry of Empire, or do they want to be an imperial nation that the world may be the better because they rule, because they are worthy to bear the burden, are able to grasp the questions submitted, and to direct the policy of an Empire?

Now, so far as the people as a whole have gone to-day they have not, I submit to you, shown that keen interest in the duties of imperial power that they have shown in the narrower question as to whether their own land, this corner of the Empire, be or be not victorious and prosperous. There is far more interest among the masses of the people to-day in the question of a casual victory or a casual defeat, than there is in the adminis-

tration of this mighty Empire and the knowledge that is needed for ruling it well, for guiding it aright. I return to India, for here we can study our problem. How much do you know of your Indian Empire? How much do you understand of the questions which are questions of life and death to 300,000,000 of people whom you despotically rule? How much do you know about the causes of the famines which for the last five years have devastated that magnificent dependency, and have broken the hearts of those who are striving to remedy when remedy comes too late? It is not the part of an imperial people to allow famine to come time after time, and then simply try to remedy it. It is well to try to remedy when the famine is there, but the duty of an imperial race is to understand the causes, the reasons of these recurring famines, and then to try to bring a remedy that shall prevent instead of a remedy that saves millions of miserable skeletons from going absolutely down into the dust of death. Want of rain? Yes! Congestion of population? Yes! But these are small parts of the cause, and dealing with these will not remedy the trouble.

Now if you did not boast yourselves a self-governing people no appeal on a matter

of this sort would lie with you. But I ask you whether you have a right to rule 300,000,000 of people in name, and not understand the alphabet of Indian questions, even very largely in your Imperial Parliament? For what do we see? That when an Indian debate is held there, great stretches of green cloth take the place of legislators, and only a few people interest themselves in the questions which are vital for the future of the Empire.

Now the blunders that are being made in India—and I submit this to you for your thought—are chiefly due to the fact that you have not yet developed that imperial insight which rules a nation on lines suited to the nation that is ruled, instead of on lines suited to the nation that is governing. You are dealing in India with a civilisation far older than your own, and a civilisation suitable to the national genius; you have to live among traditions inwoven in the hearts and lives of the people, traditions which it is folly to ignore, which it is madness to outrage and insult. In dealing with a highly civilised nation you must learn to rule according to its traditions, not according to yours, to adapt yourselves to the conditions evolved through ages and not impose on it conditions

alien to its ideas though agreeable to your own. Methods of land holding, methods of taxation, economic systems, which are suitable for Great Britain, do not suit that vast Asiatic nation whose traditions, whose customs, whose habits, are utterly different from your own.

Nor is India regarded as a part of the Empire, but as a land of exile. Men do not go out to make their home there, to love and sympathise with the people among whom they live; they go out to make money, longing for the time they will return "home" to spend it. India is not ruled for the prospering of the people, but rather for the profit of her conquerors, and her sons are treated as a conquered race. Over seventeen millions sterling a year are taken from her as "Home Charges" to be spent in England, while English officials in India draw abnormally high salaries. The ranks of her Civil Service are filled by competitive examination, and the examination does not concern itself with good breeding, courtesy, power to rule men. The successful product of a cramming tutor is not necessarily fit to be entrusted with despotic authority, away from all the public opinion for which he cares, and more harm is done by arrogance and harshness than is counterbalanced by devotion to duty. There

is little effort to understand an ancient, conservative and aristocratic people, and the real virtues of the Englishman, his conscientiousness, his diligence, his wish to do justice, are masked by a repellent demeanour and a chilly superciliousness of bearing. Nor is there anything in this huge bureaucracy to arouse the instinct of loyalty so deep-seated in the Indian breast. The crowd of officials veils the Crown, and the Monarch is hidden behind a mass of clerks. The Viceroy with his five years' term, appointed in England for political reasons, appears more as the head clerk of a great system of clerks than as a symbol of an Emperor, and he cannot rouse the personal loyalty which in India means power. Far better would it be to place on the Indian vice-throne a Prince of the Royal House, a living representative of the Imperial Crown, surround him with all that is wisest and best in India, and let him rule as well as reign. And England had done wisely had she sent her heir-apparent to be crowned at Delhi, as proxy for the Emperor, amid all her feudatory princes and the glitter of Oriental state. Sentiment is a great factor in Empire everywhere, and most of all in the East.

And now about the famines. London

went wild with admiration over the magnificent Indian soldiers, the splendour of their stature and bearing, their strength, dignity and warrior-port. But there is danger of the deterioration of the race whence these splendid warriors have sprung, of the continually recurring famines sapping the vitality of the races which bear such sons. These men were chiefly from Râjputâna, from the Punjab, and these provinces have been struggling with famine these five years.

What causes the famines? Partly the financial drain of the "Home Charges" and the huge bureaucracy. Partly the destruction of the manufactures of India for the profit of Lancashire, the compulsory revelation of trade secrets, and the forcing on India of English methods of production. Partly the destruction of the communal system of land-tenure, the imposing of the English system of landlordism, of rigid rents and taxes levied in money in lieu of the flexible indigenous system of proportionate rents and taxes paid in kind; partly the network of railways facilitating the buying up of crops and sweeping them away for export.

The old custom met the irregularities of the rainfall by a system of granaries, wherein the State stored in good seasons the grain

that would be needed in bad; the fat seasons balanced the lean; when the peasant's store gave out the prince's store was ready. Moreover, the peasant himself stored his grain, and kept a year's stock in hand, where now he is tempted to sell for export, and faces starvation when the rains fail. Even this year, while famine threatened, Indian wheat was thrown into foreign markets. And in all parts of India, especially in the feudatory States, pressure is put on the rulers to desert the wise old custom of preparing for years of dearth in years of plenty, and to offer up their subjects to the English fetish of Free Trade. The prince who adopts Western methods unsuited to his State is praised as "enlightened," while the prince who follows customs approved by millennia of use is censured as retrograde. In some States this pressure is resisted by able Indian ministers, but for how long, if the English pressure continues, will they be able to hold their own? That is a point that, if you are an imperial people, you should study, should make up your minds upon, should understand, for it means the life of millions of your fellow-subjects. And these questions of Indian food and Indian manufacture, if they are to be rightly solved, will have to be

solved in accordance with the tradition of the people, and not in deference to modern ideas as to the way in which trade is best carried on among these Western populations.

There, then, is a difficult, dry, uninteresting subject. But you have no right to be rulers unless you take these questions into account; you have no right to throw all the responsibility on a handful of men, and then, as is continually done, fetter even the discretion of the men on the spot by the traditions of your India Office here. You should take into counsel some of the leading Indian thinkers who know their country, men of proved and splendid ability as administrators, and should follow their advice in the questions that touch their own people. What is the use of cheering Indian soldiers in the street? What is the use of praising the imperial pageantry that you see when the prince reviews those troops? what is the use of boasting of the greatness of the Empire, if you are not considering the families of the men who are left behind in India, and if you are not trying to make that land what it ought to be, your strongest bulwark, instead of what it is to a very large extent, a danger and a menace to the Empire?

Let us consider the lack of sympathy of

which I spoke, and which so hides the sterling qualities of the English. I will take a small case from the mouth of an English resident, Colonel Barr, in the Deccan, a man who shows the sympathy and good feeling that he urges on his fellow-officials. He wrote an article lately in an Indian magazine in which he pointed out some of the ways in which anger and bad feeling were made between the races. And I take the illustration because it is one which is significant. You will probably rather sympathise for the moment with the English official than with the Indians he addressed. A man, very likely a good and a brave officer, was sent to a State in Râjputâna; he found famine had scourged the land, and he naturally desired to bring some remedy and to increase the wealth of the population. What was the advice that he gave in open durbar? Believing that he was giving good advice, he, as everyone familiar with India knows, gave advice that would anger to his heart every man who listened to him: he told them that they ought to try and improve their cattle trade. Now, to many of you that may mean nothing; it did not mean much to him. But, as Colonel Barr pointed out, to those Hindûs to whom he spoke the slaying of a

bull or a cow is an utterly inhuman crime; the result of that advice was a revolt of feeling against the Englishman, which hardly any subsequent trying to do justice would wipe out of the hearts of those people. It may seem to you a little thing, because you are accustomed to the slaying of cattle; but to the Hindû these animals are sacred; they look on them as the creatures who make their prosperity, who plough their fields, who draw their carts, who give milk for their children; they love them and honour them, and in most Indian States until lately cow-killing has been punished with the death penalty. Think, then, what it means when the exponent of the imperial rule advises them to increase their cattle trade! It is an insult to them, and that goes deeper than an injustice; it outrages their religious feelings, and that is your greatest peril in India. Not to reverence the religion of another man, to look on what is dearer to him than life with scorn and with contempt, to ignore his religious prejudices and to trample on his religious beliefs—that was the thing that made the Mutiny of the last century, and is the only thing, I verily believe, that could make another mutiny in India. The Indians do not desire to be disloyal, they do not de-

sire any other rule—they would rather be under the Imperial Crown of England than under any other Government that could be made,—but if you touch religion, you touch what to them matters more than life or limb. And if your rulers could learn sympathy with their religious feelings, they would bind India more closely to the Empire than in any other way. Take another instance of lack of sympathy, and of a constant wound kept open that should be closed. There is a monument erected in Cawnpur over the well into which some English women and children were thrown during the Mutiny—a cruel massacre truly, but not more terrible than some deeds wrought by British troops during that madness on both sides. When in Cawnpur, I passed the entrance into the enclosure wherein the monument is, and I saw posted up the notice: "No native may enter." Now is it wise thus to perpetuate an evil and a bitter memory? If some Indians slew the English, others risked and lost life in the saving of them; Indian princes saved India to British rule; Indian soldiers fought and died for England; Indian servants risked all to save their masters, to save English women and children; and I have heard an Indian remark that if a monument is to perpetuate

the madness of a few, England might well also raise a monument to commemorate the loyalty of the many, and inscribe it with the names of Indians who died that English power and English people might live.

Nor should Britain forget that where she prevents a subject nation from doing for itself, the duty lies the more heavily on her that that nation shall not suffer by her rule. The very fact that we have there a despotism makes the burden of duty greater. Canada, Australia, New Zealand—these can take care of themselves; and because they are strong, self-governing communities, it is well known that care must be taken to consult their feelings, care must be taken to safeguard their interests. But there is not the same power of articulate expression in India, and just because articulate expression is wanting is the burden on you the heavier to do fully your duty to the land. We must take this feeling of duty as the foundation of the Empire, and not the gaining of wealth, of power, of the extension of its borders. We want to weave the sense of duty into the English heart, if truly the Empire is to grow and to succeed; not by successful war, but by justice and good government in peace will the Empire's future be secured. And

though war be sometimes necessary, as I well know it is, in the moulding of Empires, it should be a thing to grieve over and not to rejoice over, it should be a thing which should be looked on as the exception as far as possible, and righteousness of rule as the only justification of Empire.

Take as an example Egypt, and you will see more of what I mean. There I think England may fairly say that she has governed the country for the people of the country and not for her own profit and her own gain; she has made the people happier, she has increased the productiveness of the soil, she has not gained, but has rather borne burden and difficulty there. And it is that which should be our model in the future, rather than some of our actions in other lands.

For when we come to study to its roots this great question of Empire we find that every really great ruler in the past has been the ruler who made himself a constant sacrifice to his duty, and who thought more of the duty of protection than he did of the enjoyment of power. The danger to this dawning Empire will never lie in defeat in war; the danger to the Empire will come if the weak are not rightly protected, and if justice and righteousness do not mark the

extension of British rule. Very, very clearly was that seen some five thousand years ago in India, when one of her rulers was being warned of his duty by a great teacher of religion, and the words are so significant and so eternally true, although in a fashion startling in the way of putting the thing, that I will read them to you as being the condition of righteous Empire.

"The Creator created power for the sake of protecting weakness; do not therefore come into hostile contact with the weak; take care that the eyes of the weak do not burn thee with thy kinsmen. In a race scorched by the eyes of the weak no children take birth, such eyes burn the race to its very roots. Weakness is more powerful than the greatest power, for the power that is scorched by weakness becomes totally exterminated. If a person who has been humiliated or struck fail while shrieking for assistance to obtain a protector, divine chastisement overtakes the King and brings about his destruction. Do not, O King, in the enjoyment of power, take wealth from those that are weak. Take care that the eyes of the weak do not burn thee like a blazing fire. The tears shed by weeping men afflicted by tyranny slay the children and the animals of those that oppressed them.

When a weak person fails to find a rescuer, the great rod of divine chastisement falls."

There is the very essence which each of us must understand and take to heart if the British Empire is to grow and be a blessing to the world. Power exists not for what it can take, but for what it can give; power exists not for what it can grasp, but for what it can protect. And an Empire is only great when under the shelter of the Empire the weak and the defenceless find their safety and security, when the ruler rules to help and not to tyrannise, when the Empire is based on protection and not on force. There is no danger to this dawning Empire, in the nations around it to whom your eyes are turned so much. Russia is strong, she cannot injure you; Germany is strong, she cannot injure you; but the weak of your own populations, if you neglect them, they will undermine your power, for those who have no earthly protector have the protection of the Maker of Kings, of the Giver of Empires. That, then, is the root idea which should underlie a true Imperialism. It is a trust far more than a glory; it is a responsibility far more than a joy.

A truly imperial people in these days must be a people who put the duty of human

brotherhood in the forefront of their policy, and who learn that it is a law for nations as well as for individuals that they must do to others as they desire that others should do to them. As they take up the sceptre of Empire they should see where it is wanted for guidance, for help, for protection, and the duty of an Empire must vary with the people whom it rules, and with the civilisation that it conquers. You should not treat an ancient Empire and civilisation like India as you would treat savage people and barbarian nations. You have gradually to educate, to train, to elevate, otherwise the Empire will not be truly strong. I saw once in a London paper that "when all is said, we took India by the sword and we must hold her by the sword." That is not the imperial spirit, but the spirit of the tyrant expressing itself through the press. It is not true, either, that we conquered India by the sword and hold her by the sword. We conquered her by the swords of her own children, who thought we would rule her better than her own princes had done; we hold her to-day by those same swords, just as in the Indian Mutiny it was Indian princes that saved the Empire to England. She could not have done it alone and unassisted. And that is still the truth,

and will become more and more the truth, just in proportion as you welcome them as fellow-servants and as brothers, and not as a subject nation, as a conquered people. The genius of Empire is to make every nation that you conquer feel that you bring them into the Imperial Family, and that they and you from that time forward are brothers, and not conquered and conquerors. We lost America simply because we denied brotherhood, and tried to win by threat what we could not win by justice. That great lesson was given to the British nation when the British Empire began to dawn, and it will be well if we learn that lesson now, and do not lose other parts of our Empire.

I believe, thoroughly believe, that at the present time to this British nation the possibility of a world Empire is offered. I believe that in the cycle of evolution, and the growth of peoples, the time has come in the vast world-history where this power of serving the world is offered to the British nation—that I believe to be true. And I believe it because I am a Theosophist, and have studied history in the light of occultism. How vast a destiny for Britain, how magnificent a possibility for the world, if this nation can rise to the greatness of such a destiny, if this

nation can be heroic enough to hold and guide and uplift. For it would mean nothing less than a world-peace, amid which a mighty civilisation might grow up greater than the past has seen. It would mean to the world a federation so strong of peace-loving nations, that they would be able to impose peace upon the world because none should be strong enough to break it. And the need of the world is for such a world-wide peace, so that the problems may be dealt with which are threatening the present civilisation, and the nations may have time to look at home instead of always keeping anxious eyes abroad.

There are questions to be decided by the great race to which you belong, questions of social life, questions of the getting rid of the terrible poverty that oppresses masses of the people, economic questions pressing for solution, which need to be decided by the calm wisdom of the wisest, and not to be put aside for the struggle of contending nationalities, nor be answered by the madness of revolutionary fury. We need an Empire of peace, of justice, within which a new civilisation may gradually grow up, a civilisation which should be peace not war, co-operation not competition, education not cramming, comfort not pauperism.

The type of religion that precedes the founding of a new civilisation presages the nature of that civilisation. Theosophy teaches us to see that great religious movements have heralded great Empires, but that each religion, being separative, has heralded an Empire that has held its own against the world instead of leading a united world to progress. And it shows us that as we have now no new religion, but a religious movement that asserts the common basis of all religions, the spiritual unity of man, so we shall have a peace civilisation in which all nations shall find a place. Religious peace will precede international peace; the stilling of the rivalries of religions will precede the stilling of the rivalries of nations. This essential service to the coming Empire, theosophy, and only theosophy, can render. For it alone quarrels with no religion, asserts the value and the truth of each, seeks no converts, makes no proselytes. This Empire must be composed of peoples of many faiths, and these faiths must be reverenced and protected, not assailed. The missionary spirit is ever a menace to the Empire, stirring up religious animosities and setting one people against another. It must be replaced by the theosophical spirit, if the Empire is to be

cemented together, and religion is to cease to be a disruptive force. For an Empire like the British theosophy is a necessity, even more than it is a necessity for separate peoples. And it alone can prevent the Empire from being a menace to religions other than the Christian. Thus the spread of theosophy throughout the world heralds the shaping of a world Empire whose watchword shall be Brotherhood, Righteousness and Service. That Empire shall be the cradle of a more spiritual race, of a race inspired by Wisdom and by Love.

Does the claim seem too great for a movement so small, too grandiose for beginnings so feeble? Yet the promise of the golden corn is in the hidden grains below the earthy clods, and every religious movement at the beginning has been as the "little leaven," scarce visible yet destined to permeate and change the whole. No contempt poured on the theosophical movement is as bitter, as disdainful, as the proud Roman citizen poured on the despised Christianity of his time, yet his Rome perished and Christianity has grown into a world-wide faith. Now it is Theosophy which is the Stone rejected by the builders, and it shall in turn become the "head of the corner." For the wise Master-

Builders see not greatness and smallness as they are seen by the eyes of men; they judge by the strength of the indwelling life, and not by the outer magnificence of the form.

We have read of Empires in the past where the sense of public duty moved all who took share of rule, from the King down to the lowest hand that wielded power, and the one object of one of those mighty civilisations of the past was to make the people happy, for that, it was written, is the duty of kings. Governments exist for the sake of the people and not for the sake of governments. Governments exist not that some men may be highly placed and highly paid, but that the masses of the people, more ignorant than they, may be guided to a better happiness than unguided they could reach. Governments only exist so that nations may live in peace and in prosperity, and the test of the goodness of the government lies in the happiness of the people. And what is needed for this is not that we should look only at external methods of ruling, but that each one in our own individual life should make duty and not pleasure the rule of life, the discharge of duty and not the gaining of enjoyment that which is the impelling motive of conduct.

In forgetfulness of this lies the great danger of Britain. Before the late war she was growing too luxurious, she was growing too pleasure-loving. If she is to be truly imperial, she must think of duty, of industry, of diligence in the discharge of duty, in every rank of life; and the ideal of life must cease to be to earn money, anyhow, and then to live in luxurious idleness. Idleness is only justifiable as it is the holiday which prepares for better exercise of duty; and duty, diligence and industry must be the watchword of everyone among us. From the King on his throne to the poorest labourer in the street, the ideal should be an ideal of duty and of service, and not of gaining the means to live idly and luxuriously. And the fault that that ideal has spread amongst the people which makes them constantly desire, if they can, to reach idleness, that which spreads among the people the habit of drink and the spirit of gambling, is the example of luxurious living which has been set them in high places, and the sight of that grasping of pleasure instead of discharging of duty, which is the mark of a people who are decaying and not of an Empire that is forming. If, then, those signs that a few years ago were marked, of growing luxury, of growing

idleness, of growing desire for personal pleasure and physical enjoyment, if those are not changed by the setting of a noble example by the educated and the thoughtful of a life that should be more dignified, more self-controlled, more devoted to national ends and less eager after personal gain, unless that is done throughout the nation as a whole, but chiefly among those classes that because they have so much more have the heavier duty of setting example upon them, unless that is done the dream of Empire will vanish, and the opportunity offered to Britain will pass on to some other nation.

Shall it be so? Shall it be that this great offer of being the greatest Servant of Humanity that the world has known should slip from your fingers because you are not strong enough to grasp it, and because you are still so childish that you care only for the glitter of rule and not for the doing of service? On the answer to that question depends the future of Imperialism here. If it be an Imperialism of greed of power, of the desire to take more and more land away from other nations, of thinking more of growing big than of growing worthy, and of grasping more instead of ruling well, then I do not believe the Divine Justice will give the next World Empire to such a nation,

or assign to those who show themselves as children the man's burden of rule and of heavy responsibility. But if, as I hope and pray, this great people arises to a sense of their power and responsibilities, if they take the striking lesson given them within the last few days, when the central figure of the whole pageantry and glitter of Empire was struck down, and the people were reminded how near a Crown might be to Death, if they take that lesson, and if, as we see hinted in the papers, the coronation that is to follow will have the religious side more emphasised and the show side less emphasised, if when England's greatest gather again in Westminster Abbey, as may God grant, to crown the King, if then they think more of the duty that lies upon the Monarch than the greatness of his station, if they see in the Imperial Crown a sign of divine power for the helping of the peoples and not for the mere glorification of the wearer, if they realise that this world Empire is a mighty and a serious thing, not a thing of flags and illuminations but a thing of human duty and responsibility, if, as of old, the night before the coronation is not spent in feasting but in fasting, not in shouting and in hurrahing, but in hoping and in praying, then the check which has come in

the nation's way in the very moment of its highest joy may be a check that will make the Empire far more possible than it was before. It is a good thing that through the length and breadth of the nation one feeling should make its way; it is a good thing that the nation should think of its wider self rather than of narrow individual aims; it is a good thing that the hearts of the people should be stirred to interest in wider uses and should be ready to rejoice over the greatness of a people and not only over individual gain. But what we have to do, the duty that it seems to me lies upon us, is to try to check in the people everything that merely sees the joy of the power and does not see the weight of the responsibility. And I urge on you who are parts of this Empire-making people, you who have influence in the future and have a share in the guiding of the State, I ask you whether in public speech and in private conversation it may not be well in the years that lie before us to strike continually this note of public duty, to make patriotism less a pride and love in the size of the Empire, than a pride and love in the Empire's usefulness, in her serviceableness, in her helpfulness to the world. Do not let the Eastern peoples think, as they think too often, that England cares for nothing

but trade, and that she uses her mighty military power for the mere opening up of new markets which she desires for the enrichment of her home. Let them know that Britain is too great to desire to steal from those who do not wish to give; let them hear her voice as one that speaks for justice to the weak, and see her hands outstretched to defend. All over the world there are nations that would welcome the protectorate of England if they knew that it meant for them protection against tyranny, against oppression and against wrong; but in order that it may be so, they must see that in the Empire you have you are doing justice and loving mercy, and that you do not try to use your power to trample on the helpless and the weak.

That, then, it seems to me, friends, is the duty that lies in front. Let us have an Imperialism, but let it be one of righteousness, of justice, of love and of truth. Let it not be a matter of pride, save the pride of doing duty well and wielding great power nobly. Let your ambition be to be known as the helper of the weak, the protector of the helpless, the one who is ready to stand between the feeble and those who desire to oppress. Let that be your pride, that you hold a shield high, under which the nations of the world

may gather, sure of protection, sure of help, sure of justice, sure of sympathy. Train your boys, your girls, those who are to be the makers, the upholders, the inspirers of the Empire in the future, train them to a sense of responsibility, train them to frugal living, to control over their passions and emotions, to rule over their bodies and their minds, to hatred of all that is mean, that is cruel, that is oppressive, that is unfair. Make them what they should be, honourable citizens of a mighty Empire. Then the Imperialism of the future shall be a blessing and not a curse, a light to the Empire and to the world that I hope it will serve; an Imperialism under which the younger nations shall grow up, an Imperialism under which the subject peoples shall be as proud of the British Islands as those who are born upon their soil; an Imperialism in which, as was once written, the King shall regard every man as his son and guard and love him as his own; an Imperialism which shall be the first of the Empires of the world to exist for the good of all those whom it rules, world-wide because world-loved, and powerful because the Throne is based on the Brotherhood that nothing can destroy.

England and India

An Address delivered at South Place Chapel, Finsbury, 5th October 1902

THE relations between conquering nations and subject peoples form a question of the present day which may well tax the thought of the most thoughtful, as well as stir the feelings of the most sensitive. How these relations should be carried on, how both conquering nation and subject people may profit by the links that arise between them—on the answer to that problem depends much of the future progress of the world, and I have thought that with the traditions that are associated with the name of South Place I might well take up before you this morning the relations which exist between one of the greatest of conquering nations and the greatest of subject peoples, and see how far it is possible to lay down certain lines of thought which may possibly be of help to you in your own thinking, which may possibly suggest to you ideas which, perchance, otherwise might not have come in your way.

Now, every two nations that come into

touch the one with the other should, it is very clear, each have something to learn, each have something to teach, and this is perhaps pre-eminently the case where two such nations as India and England are concerned. Where England has to do with savage peoples her path is comparatively simple; where she has to do with a nation far older than her own civilisation, a nation with fixed and most ancient traditions, a nation that was enjoying a high state of civilisation long ere the seed of Western civilisation was sown—where she has to do with such a people, the relations must needs be complicated and difficult, difficult for both sides to understand, difficult for both sides to make fruitful of good rather than of evil. And I know of no greater service that can be rendered, either in this land or in that, than the service of those who try to understand the question and to draw the nations closer together by wisdom, instead of driving them further apart by ignorance and by prejudice.

Now it seems to me that with regard to India, the subject may fall quite naturally under three heads: first, the head of religion; then, of education; and then, of political relations, under which latter I include the

social conditions of the people. Let me try, then, under these three headings to suggest to you certain ideas as to English relations with India which may possibly hereafter bear fruit in your minds, if they be worthy to do so.

I said, that when two nations come together each has something to teach and something to learn, and that is true. So far as religion is concerned, I think India has more to teach than she has to learn. So far as education is concerned much has to be done on both sides, but on the whole, in most respects, England has more to teach there than to learn. With regard to political conditions, there both nations have much to learn in mutual understanding and in adaptation to this old civilisation of India of methods of thought, of rule, of social conditions utterly alien from her own conditions, so that changes, if it be wise to introduce them, must be brought about with the greatest care, the greatest delicacy, after the longest and most careful consideration.

I. Let us take, then, *first the question of religion*, on which I submit to you that India has more to teach than she has to learn; and I say that for this reason, that almost everything which can be learned from Christianity

exists also in the Eastern faiths, and you have with regard to this to remember in India that you are dealing with a people of various faiths and many schools of thought, some of them exceedingly ancient, deeply philosophic, as well as highly spiritual. Now, 70 per cent. of the population of India are Hindûs, belong to one great religion, which includes under that name an immense variety of philosophic schools and sects. For when we speak of Hindûism, we are not speaking of what you might call a simple religion such as is modern Christianity, though even there you have divisions enough, but of a religion which has always encouraged to the fullest extent the freedom of the intellect, and which recognises nothing as heresy which the intellect of man can grasp, which the thought of man can formulate. You have under that general name the greatest diversity of thought, and always Hindûism has encouraged that diversity, has not endeavoured to check it. Hindûism is very, very strict in its social polity, it is marvellously wide in its theological, its ethical, its philosophical thought. It includes even on one side the Chârvaka system, the most complete atheism, as it would here be called; while it includes on the other, forms of the most popular religious thinking

that it is possible to conceive. The intellect, then, has ever been free under the sceptre of the religion which embraces 70 per cent. of the great Indian population.

The majority of the remaining 30 per cent. are followers of the great Prophet of Arabia, Muhammad, and amongst them to-day there are great signs of awakening of thought, there are great signs of revival of deeper philosophical belief. While the majority of them still are, I was almost going to say, plunged in religious bigotry, from Western and from Eastern standpoints, rather repeating a creed than understanding a philosophy, there is none the less at the present day a very considerable awakening and a hope that the great faith of Islâm may stand higher in the eyes of the world by knowledge and by power than it has done for many a hundred years in the past. Then, in addition to this—the Hindû with its 70 per cent., the faith of Islâm, which counts some 50,000,000 of the population—you have Christianity, imported, of course, from the West, not touching the higher classes of the Hindûs at all, but having a considerable following, especially in the South, among the most ignorant, among the most superstitious people: you have the Parsi community, a thoughtful,

learned and wealthy community, though a very small one, only numbering, I think, some 80,000 people; you have the Jain community, also very wealthy, and having among it a certain number of very learned men, a community whose rites go back to the very early days of Hindû thought and Hindû civilisation; and you have in addition to this the warrior nation of the Sikhs, bound together by their devotion to their great Prophet, and forming to-day a most important part of the fighting strength of the English Empire in India. Buddhism has scarcely any power in India proper. It rules, of course, in Burma, and it rules in Ceylon, both, of course, forming part of the Indian Empire, but in India proper it is practically non-existent.

In this way, then, you have a country, including Burma and Ceylon, in which you have clearly marked out some seven different faiths, and you have a ruling nation, Christian in its theory, and entirely unsectarian so far as its rule over the people is concerned; but inevitably under the shadow of that conquering nation there grows up an immense missionary propaganda in India, which is strong, not by its learning, not by the influence of its missionaries, but simply from

the fact that they belong to the conquering, to the ruling people, and so have behind them, in the mind of the great mass of the people, the weight which comes by the authority of the English Empire, as you may say, backing that particular form of faith. Now it is this condition that you want to understand, if you would deal fairly with the religious question in India. The most utter impartiality is the rule of the Government, but it is that simple impartiality which may be said to take up the position that all religions are equally indifferent. This is not the kind of spirit that is wanted in a country where religion is the strongest force in life. You need a sympathetic impartiality, not an impartiality of indifference; and it is that in which so far the Government has naturally very largely failed. You want in India at the present time a definite recognition of the fact that the religions that are there, and that rule the hearts of the great mass of the people and the minds of the most thoughtful and learned of the nation—that these religions are worthy of the highest respect, and not of mere toleration. You have to realise that the missionary efforts there do an infinity of harm and very little good; that they set religion against religion

and faith against faith; whereas what you want in India is the brotherhood of religions, and the respect of men of every faith for the faiths which are not theirs. You need there the teaching and the spirit of Theosophy, which sees every religion as the partial expression of one great truth. The more aggressive one faith shows itself to be, the more it is stirring up religious antagonisms and religious hatreds. Danger to the Empire lies in the aggressive policy of Christianity, whereby large numbers of men, ignorant of the religions that they attack, treat them with contempt, with scorn, with insult—that is one of the dangers that you have to consider in India, when you remember that in the minds of the people England stands behind the missionary. The Christian missionary converts very, very rarely, in the most exceptional of cases, any man who is educated, any man who is trained in his own faith, any man of what are called the higher and thoughtful castes. It makes its converts among the great mass of the most ignorant of the population; it makes them chiefly in times of famine and of distress; it makes them more largely for social reasons than for reasons which are religious in their nature. By the folly of the Hindûs themselves vast masses of the Indians have been

left without religious teachings altoget have been regarded with contempt, have been looked upon with arrogance. It is among these classes that the Christian missionaries find their converts. Once such a man is converted to Christianity, he, who before was not allowed to cross the threshold of a Hindû, is admissible as a Christian into the house, because Christianity is the religion of the conquering nation; and you can very well recognise how strong a converting power that has on the ignorant, on the degraded, on the socially oppressed. It is not necessary for me to say much on that here, although here nothing much can be done in this matter. It is rather in India that one tries to meet that question, pointing out to the educated and religious how great a danger to their own faith, as well as how great a wrong to humanity, it is to neglect vast portions of the population and so to drive them as it were to find refuge in an alien creed, which at least treats them with decency, if it cannot do much for them in ethical training.

This religious question in India is one that you need to understand, for Eastern teaching is everywhere more and more spreading in the West. I could not help being amused the other day by a remark of a dis-

consolate missionary coming back to America, and declaring that while he was striving to convert people from Hindûism, he found on his return that large numbers of the educated were tainted with the philosophy that in India he was trying to destroy. That is perfectly true. Hindû thought is making its way here in general very much more rapidly than Christianity is making its way in India; and it is touching the flower of the population here, whereas Christianity is only touching the poorest and most ignorant in India. That is why I said that India had much more to teach than to learn in matters of religion; she has plenty in her own faith which can train and cultivate the masses of her people, but that must be done by Hindû missionaries and not by Christian missionaries. It would be the wisdom of England to look upon all these religions as methods of training, of guiding, of helping the people, and to recognise that the work of the Christian in India is among his own population, is among his own countrymen, is among the Christian communities, and that he should look on his faith as a sister faith among many, and not as unique, to which people of other religions are to be converted. The greatest, perhaps the only serious danger to English rule in

India lies in the religious question, in the bad feelings stirred up by the missionaries, in the difficulties that are caused by their lack of understanding of the people. Theosophy has done much to counteract this danger, and has been striving in India to stimulate the peoples of the various faiths to take up these religious questions for themselves, and by their energy in the teaching of their own religion to cause the spread of religious knowledge which may make each faith strong within its own borders.

II. Pass from the religious question to *the educational*, and here a great danger lies immediately in front, a danger which arises largely out of that want of sympathy and that want of understanding which is the chief fault of the English people as a conquering nation, as a ruler in their relations with subject peoples. They try to be just, they try to do their duty, they are industrious, they are hard-working, endeavouring to do the work which is put into their hands. Their weak point lies in the fact that they are very unsympathetic, that they cannot put themselves into the place of others, and that they have a tendency to think they are so immensely superior to others that whatever is good for them is good for every-

body else; they fail to understand the traditions and the customs which must exist in an ancient people, a people of high and complicated civilisation, and this lack of sympathy has a very great bearing on the question of education. Practically, Indian education, on the higher line, was started by the wisdom of Lord Macaulay. He began the work of Indian education, and he began it wisely and well. It has been carried on year after year by a long succession of Viceroys, who for the most part have done well with regard to the educational question; but while they have done well, it is perfectly true that there are great and serious faults in the Indian system, faults which need to be corrected and which neutralise much of the value of the education that is given. I have not time to go very fully into these faults; it must suffice to say that memory has been cultivated to the exclusion of the reasoning faculty, and that even when science has been taught it has been taught by the text-book, and not in the laboratory, it has been taught by memory, and not by experiment. In addition to that there has been a crushing number of examinations, forcing the whole life of the boy as well as of the man, and keeping up a continual strain

which has exhausted the pupil ere he has left the University. It has been forgotten that the Indian student is naturally studious and not playful enough, that his inclination is to work a great deal too hard, that what was wanted was the stimulation to play more than the stimulation to study, that the physical training of the boys was more necessary to be seen to than the intellectual training. The physical training was left out of sight, and though carefully looked after in ancient India, it was now neglected. As these differences were overlooked, everything was done to force the intellectual side in an unwise way, by cramming rather than by organic development of study, and as the University degrees were made the only passport to Government employment and to the professions at large, it became a wild desire on the part of the Indian parent to force his boys on as rapidly as possible with little regard to the kind of education that was given. These faults have been seen by the present Viceroy, and eager to mend the faults he sent out a University Commission, which has just made its report. Now the first fault of that Commission was that it only had two representatives of India on it, and the rest Englishmen, and the English members of that Commission were

not all acquainted with the nature of the problems of Indian education. They have issued their Report. The Indian judge, who was the Hindû member of that Commission, has issued a minority report against many of the recommendations made by the majority consisting of the English members and one Mussulmân. The very fact that you get a report divided in that racial way ought at once to make our rulers pause, and when you find that many of the recommendations of the majority report are disapproved by the representative of 70 per cent. of the population that you are going to teach, it seems as though it might be wise if the Government here would look into the matter a little carefully before it gives its decision. For it is the view of the Indian people, now being expressed in every way possible, that the report of the Commission strikes a heavy blow at Indian education, that the whole of the great work of the past will be destroyed, and that the education of the future will be placed beyond the reach of large numbers of the people.

To begin with, the education is now made more costly, and by that one word you have its condemnation for India. The fees are everywhere to be raised, so that University

education will be practically beyond the reach of those who need it most. It is said that many go to the University who are not fit for it; but the remedy for that is to improve the teaching in your Universities, and not to increase the cost of the education; for by high fees you will not exclude the idle and the unworthy rich, but you will exclude great masses of the worthy and industrious poor; and when you remember that it is the Indian tradition that learning and poverty go together, that the man who is learned has no need of wealth, that you find the highest caste the poorest caste although the most learned—if you could realise that and put yourself in their place, you would understand the agitation which at present is convulsing the most thoughtful people in India, when they see that the Government is going to exclude their sons, the flower of the intellectual population, from all share in education by the high fees which it is going to impose. It is said by the Commission, that scholarships may serve for the poorer classes, but you cannot give scholarships to thousands of that vast population. You can give scholarships to a boy here and there, but you cannot give them to the great mass; the greatest danger is the discontent of the

thoughtful, and that is the discontent which is being stirred up at the present time. The truth is, that Lord Curzon, able as he is, has only five years in which to rule, and he is eager to mark his Viceroyalty by some great scheme of change. But if England be not careful it will be marked by the saddest monument that ever Viceroy has left behind him, the destruction of the education of a great people, and the shutting out of vast masses of the intellectual from education whereby they might rise to be your helpers in the ruling of their country, but shut out from which they become an element of danger. That is not a thing which it is well to have said by a subject nation of the type of the Indian nation. It is said among the thoughtful people now that this is intended to destroy education, in order that Indians may not have their fair share in the government of their own land. That is the thought which is spreading, that is the motive which they believe lies behind the policy of Lord Curzon. They think he desires to stop education, in order that the Indians may not rise to the higher posts in their own country, and that is a most dangerous idea to spread through the most intellectual, through the most thoughtful classes. I have had letter after

letter pleading with me to do something here to prevent this report from receiving the sanction of the Government, but how difficult it is to do that where the people who give the decision are ignorant themselves, and where they naturally rely on their own agents rather than on what any casual speaker may say.

In the attempt started by the Theosophical Society in India, and carried on by large numbers of the Hindûs themselves, to build up a large Hindû College, we are trying to do the very opposite of some of the things that are being suggested to the Government, and are already doing some of the things they want done. We have put down the fees to the lowest possible point; we are training the lads in the laboratory; we give them less and less instruction in which memory only is cultivated, and in which the reasoning faculties are thrown entirely on one side. We are teaching them to play games; we are training strong and healthy bodies, and are endeavouring to prevent the great nervous strain involved in study. But if this Commission Report be adopted much of our work will be destroyed, and the results which we are trying to bring about, and have brought about to some extent, will be utterly

wasted, will be impossible to carry on; for the boy that we want to reach, the intelligent, the eager, those who are longing to learn but whose parents are poor, they will be shut utterly out of education, for unless we adopt the Government rate of fees, the Government may close the college and not permit it to carry on its work. That is the kind of difficulty that has to be dealt with in these educational measures. If you would let Indians guide their own education, if you would give them all that is best in the West, when it is suitable, but not insist that all that is good in England is necessarily good there; if you would try to see things from their own standpoint, if you did not insist on highly paid Englishmen as instructors, instead of educated Indians, you would work at less expense and with more efficiency.

But what is there to be done, when the Government here has the last word and knows nothing about the conditions; and when the data on which the decisions are made are sent from India by those who are apart from Indian sympathy, data on which the Indians are not consulted, although it is their children whose future is in jeopardy. What is really needed is to make education cheap, widespread, scientific, literary and

technical; to change the policy which draws the intelligent Indians only into Government service, and to get them to take up the other lines of work which affect the economic future of their country; to educate them in arts and manufactures; not to leave the direction of industry to people who are of the ruling nation, but to draft into industrial undertakings large numbers of the educated classes—that is the kind of education that is wanted, and the kind of education that England does not give to India, and will not let India give to herself.

III. Pass from that to the third point I spoke of—this *question touching on politics*, including the social and economic conditions of India. It must have struck you, those who have studied the past, that it is very strange that this country—which, when the East India Company went there in the 18th century, was one of the richest countries of the world—has now become a country to go a-begging to the world for the mere food to keep its vast population from dying of starvation by millions. The mere fact that there has been such a change in the wealth of the country should surely make those who are responsible for its rule look more closely into the economic conditions, should surely suggest that there

is something fundamentally wrong when you have these recurring famines. Six years of famine, practically, India has lately passed through. It is not due to changes of climate; these have always been there—seasons of drought, seasons of too much rain, seasons of good weather. These are not surely the direct result of English rule! They existed long before England came; they are likely to exist long after we have all passed away. Why is it that these famines recur time after time? Why is it that such myriads of people are thus doomed to starvation? Now I have not a word to say as to the efforts that are made by the English when the famine is there save words of praise. The English officials worked themselves half to death when the people were dying. But that is not the time when the work is most needed. It is prevention that we want, rather than cure; and the nation that can only deal with famine by relief-works and by charity is not a nation that in the eyes of the world can justify its authority in India. There must be causes that underlie these famines. It is the duty of the ruling nation to understand these causes, or else to allow the wisest among the Indian population to take these questions into their own hands and act as the Council of the

English rulers. Sometimes it is said that the famine is owing to the increase in the population. That is not true. What is called the peace of Britain is not a blessing, if it be the cause of famine. It is easier to the great mass of the people to have wars that kill off some of them quickly, than to have recurring famines that starve them to death after months of agony. The British peace is not a blessing, if it be punctuated by famines in which millions die by starvation. Peace is not a blessing if it kills more people than war, and that is what the peace of England is doing in India, and it is killing them after terrible sufferings, instead of by sword and by fire. It is the *cause* of these famines that we need to understand. It is a remarkable fact that where the Indian princes have been left uninterfered with the famines have not been so serious. Everywhere, where a nation lives by agriculture and has to prepare itself for a bad season, it is usual to find out a way of dealing with the natural difficulties suitable to its own spirit. Now that was done in India, and done in a very simple way, although a way that is dead against the modern "political economy." The way was a simple way in the days of ancient Egypt. We have all read of how, when Joseph was the wise minister there, he

provided for the years of famine in the years of plenty. That one sentence expresses the Indian way of dealing with famines. When there was plenty, large quantities of the food were stored, and rent and taxes were taken in food; these varied with the food raised by the people, and therefore they never pressed heavily on the people. When there was much raised the rent and taxes were higher; when the harvest was bad the king went without his share. But in the years when he got a very large share he stored it in granaries. In addition to that, after the people were fed (and the feeding of the people was the first charge), the people themselves stored the year's corn, so that if they had a bad year they could fall back on their own corn. In this way the peasant could make head against one bad season, and if there were more than one bad season the prince came to his aid, by throwing his corn on the market at a price which the people could afford to pay. Now that method of dealing with the famine problem still goes on in some States, such as Kashmir, because they will not permit their grain to be exported. But the greatest pressure is continually being put on the Maharajah of Kashmir to force him to export his rice. He has been able to hold his own so far, but the

resistance of English pressure is a terribly difficult thing for an Indian prince, and to resist it continually is not possible. Now I know how alien to English thought that method of dealing with the products of a country is; but it is far better to carry that on and save the people from famine, than to insist that the people shall sell their corn in years of plenty and starve in years of scarcity. The people want to store their corn when they have it, to keep it against the bad seasons, instead of having to import it from abroad in time of famine." And yet, in this very year, when famine was threatened, I saw not long ago in a newspaper a telegram advising the recurrence of famine in one part of India, and in the same paper that contained that telegram I saw a statement that the first shiploads of Indian wheat had left Bombay. That may be modern political economy, but it is pure idiocy! India if wisely governed may be a paradise, but we have just read that with five fools you can turn a paradise into a hell; and to impose English political economy on India is folly, well-intentioned folly, but folly none the less.

Another great cause of these famines is the way in which the land is now held. In the old days there was a common interest in the

land between princes and people. Now the nobles, the old class of zemindars, have been turned into landlords, and that is a very different thing from the old way of holding land. Then you have insisted on giving to the peasant the right to sell his land, the very last thing that he wants to do, the thing which takes away from him the certainty of food for himself and his children. No peasant in the old days had the right to sell his land, but only to cultivate it. If he needed to borrow at any time he borrowed on the crop. Now, in order to free the people from debt, they are given the right to sell their mortgaged holdings, and this means the throwing out of an agricultural people on the roads, making them landless, and the holding of the land by money-lenders. That revolution in the land system of India is one of the causes of the recurring famines, the second perhaps of the great causes. The natural result of it is that you put now power into the hands of the money-lender, and you take away from the peasant the shield that always protected him.

The railway system, too, useful as it is, has done an immense amount of harm. It has cleared away the food; it has sent the man with money into the country districts to buy up the produce which he sends abroad, giving

the peasant the rupees that he cannot eat instead of the rice and corn that he can eat.

Even when I first went to India you could hardly see a peasant woman without silver bangles on her arms and legs. Now large numbers of peasant women wear none ; these have been sold during these last years of famine, and to sell these is the last sign of poverty for the Indian peasantry. It is no good giving them money in exchange for their food. They do not know how to deal with it. They are urged to buy English goods of Manchester manufacture which wear out in a few months, instead of the Indian-made articles which last for many years. You must remember that the Indian peasant washes his clothes every day of his life, and so they need to be of great durability.

Another difficulty is the way in which you have destroyed the manufactures of India—destroyed them partly by flooding the market with cheap, showy, adulterated goods which have attracted the ignorant people, inducing them to buy what is largely worthless. All the finer manufactures of India are practically destroyed, whereas the makers used to grow rich by selling these to her wealthy men and to foreign countries. Now both the fine and coarse goods are beaten out of the country

by the cheap Manchester goods, and the dear fashionable fabrics; even if this had been done fairly it would not be so bad, but the Indian merchants were forced to give up their trade secrets to the agents of English industries. You guard your trade secrets jealously from rivals, but you have forced the Indians to give up theirs, in order that English manufacturers might have the benefit of that knowledge. In this way old trades have been gradually killed out, while the arts of India are very rapidly perishing. The arts of India depended on the social condition of the country. The artist in India was not a man who lived by competition. As far as he was concerned he did not trade at all. He was always kept as part of the great household of a noble; his board, his lodging, his clothing, were all secured to him, and he worked at his leisure and carried out his artistic ideas without difficulty and without struggle. All that class is being killed out in the stress of Western competition, and it is not as though something else were put in its place; the thing itself is destroyed, the whole market is destroyed. Now the pressure is falling on the artisan, and he is utterly unable to guard himself against it, and is falling back into the already well-filled agricultural ranks.

These are some of the questions that you have to consider and to understand. You have to understand the question of Indian taxation ; you have to understand the question of taking away from India seventeen millions a year to meet "Home," *i.e.* English, charges. You have to consider the expense of your Government in India, the exorbitant salaries that are paid to English officials. You have to realise the financial side of the problem as well as those that I have dealt with.

Friends, I have only been able to touch the fringe of a great subject. I have hoped, by packing together a number of these facts, to stir you into study rather than to convince you. For if I had tried to move your feelings I would have done little. I have preferred to point out the difficulties that have to be dealt with, so that you may study them, so that you may investigate them, so that you may form your own opinions upon them. I do not believe it is possible to do everything at once, but I do think it might be possible to form a band of English experts, who should make these questions their specialty, and who should have weight with the Government over here which deals with India, so that they could advise with wisdom,

so that they could point out the most useful path by which improvement could be made. To govern a great country like India by a Parliament over here is practically impossible. It is too clumsy an instrument for the ruling of such a people. But if you could build up in India a great Council composed of the wisest and most thoughtful of her own people; if you could take the advice of her best administrators in Indian States, her own sons; if such a Council of all that is wisest and noblest in India were gathered round the Viceroy, who should hold his post not as the reward for political service here, but because he knows and understands India; if you would leave him there for a greater space of time and not make him work in a break-neck hurry to get something done; then there would be a brighter hope on the Indian horizon. This can only be done by understanding Indian feelings and not by ignoring them, by trying to sympathise with Indian customs and not by despising them. Along these lines lies the salvation of India and of Indians alike, and it is this which I recommend to your most thoughtful consideration.

The Indian Nation

An Address delivered to the Central Hindû College Boarders' Debating Club, 1905

AT the Anniversary Meeting of the C.H.C. Boarders' Debating Club, papers were read on "The National Bond of Union among Hindûs," and the meeting was closed by Mrs Besant, who, after congratulating the club on the progress made during the year, said :

Debating clubs among boys are very useful, not only as affording pleasant meetings and interesting discussions, but also as serving for training grounds for developing the knowledge and the qualities that are needed in public life. The discipline of mind and manners in such a club prepares the young debater for future service to his country, and accustoms him to the conditions under which much of the public work is carried on. The rules which guide business meetings everywhere should be strictly followed in a debating club, and should be regarded as aids to useful and expeditious discharge of business, and not as burdensome restrictions.

To speak briefly, effectively, and to the point, to listen to an opponent's speech with patience and to reply with courtesy, are lessons learned in the club. Looking forward for a few years, you will see yourselves called on to help in administrative work in municipal and district boards, and other public bodies. There you will utilise the training you are now passing through, and a man who knows what he wants to say, who can put his views clearly and briefly, who can argue with courtesy, and who abides by the rules of discussion, is one who becomes, on all such bodies, a man of weight and usefulness. You should place before you such active partaking in public life as an honourable and legitimate object of ambition, for the happiness, prosperity and health of the community depend far more on good local administration than on big so-called political measures. The true patriot can do far more for India in these local bodies, than he can in the field of "big politics," and this work is political, in the old good sense of the term; it is the politics of the community, and has far more bearing on the happiness of the community than the international relations discussed by statesmen. A people can prosper under a very bad government and suffer

under a very good one, if in the first case the local administration is effective and in the second it is inefficient. Moreover, if a man wants to take a share in the chatter of Parliaments and the babel of party politics, he will be more useful and less mischievous if thoroughly well trained in local administration. Mr. Chamberlain was a councillor and a Mayor of Birmingham before he became a Cabinet Minister; and Englishmen gain their knowledge of public business and their power of self-government by serving as honorary magistrates and local councillors, by working on vestries, on municipalities, on boards of all kinds. Here is a line of public activity for you as patriots, in which your love of country can find legitimate and useful vent, in which you can devote your best energies to the public good.

Moreover in this, and in other college and school business, you have to learn both liberty and responsibility; you elect officers, you make rules, you carry on your business. Now the sense of liberty is strong among you, and that is well. The sense of responsibility is weak, and that is not so well. The exercise of liberty and the feeling of responsibility must grow side by side, if your little community is to be prosperous

and well-organised. You must learn to use your best thought in giving your votes, to be moved by principles not by passions. Free men who act recklessly and without a sense of responsibility destroy nations, they do not build them. You must learn tolerance, and understand that truth is many-sided, and is never all with one man or one party. A man is fortunate if he sees one aspect of truth, and doubly fortunate if, through his opponents, he can catch glimpses of other aspects. In your debates and in your studies, when you read of other religions and other customs, never condemn hastily, or denounce views you do not share. Quick condemnation of all that is not ours, of views with which we disagree, of ideas that do not attract us, is the sign of a narrow mind and of an uncultivated intelligence. Bigotry is always ignorant, and the wise boy, who will become the wise man, tries to understand and to see the truth in ideas with which he does not agree.

We have listened to two thoughtful papers on the bonds which should unite Hindûs. The writer of one speaks of Hindûs as part of a nation; the other considers more the bonds which unite Hindûs as a community within the nation. Let us consider both.

A Common Religion must ever be the strongest bond of union among the Hindûs as a community, and, in order to make Hindûism a strong bond and not a disintegrating force, we must lay stress on what is ancient and universal and ignore what is modern and local. The Sanâtana Dharma Series will aid Hindûism as a unifying force, for it contains all that Hindûs universally accept and leaves out sectarian beliefs. Every boy educated on these lines will be a link of union in the Hindû community, helping to hold it together, and as these teachings spread through the schools and colleges strong bonds of union will be forged.

A Common Language is a bond of union, and Sanskrit and English serve as common languages between Hindûs of north and south, of east and west. The Hindûs of the north and south chant the *Mantras* in Sanskrit, and discuss business and public questions in English. Therefore Sanskrit should be taught in every English Department, and English in every Pâthshâlâ.

Among the various vernaculars that are spoken in the different parts of India, there is one that stands out strongly from the rest, as that which is most widely known. It is Hindi. A man who knows Hindi can travel

over India, and find everywhere Hindi-speaking people. In the north it is the vernacular of a large part of the population, and a large additional part, who do not speak Hindi, speak languages so closely allied to it that Hindi is acquired without difficulty. Urdu is but Persianised Hindi ; Panjâbi and Gurumukhi are dialects of Hindi ; Gujerâti and Marâthi are again dialects of Hindi ; Bengâli is a softer and more melodious and poetical Hindi. It is true that when we travel south we come to language derived from a Dravidian source and not from Sanskrit, and here a real difficulty arises. But the south of India cannot afford to be cut off from the north, and the knowledge of Sanskrit in the south will make easy of acquirement its derivative Hindi, whereas Tamil and Telugu can never become universal in India. The learning of Hindi is a sacrifice that southern India might well make to the unification of the Indian nation. Then Sanskrit will bind Hindûs together in religion, English in imperial and official concerns, and Hindi in social and family life.

A Common Literature is another bond of union, and this all Hindûs have in the Shruti, the Smṛiti, the Purâṇas, the Itihâsa, the Philosophies and their commentaries, and

the Drama. This vast and splendid literature is the common heritage of all Hindûs, of all sects, of all schools, and it forms one of the strongest bonds of union in the Hindû community.

A common Religion, a common Language, a common Literature, such are the bonds of union among Hindûs, as Hindûs.

And now what of Hindûs as part of a people, what of the Indian nation?

The Indian nation of the future must combine into one coherent and organised body men of various faiths and men of various races, who in the past have been bitter enemies, and have striven against each other for many generations. Hindûs and Mussulmâns, Parsis and Christians, to say nothing of such well-marked inter-Hindû creeds as Jains and Sikhs, have to be welded into a nation, and this not by mergence of all the varying beliefs into one, which is impossible, but by the theosophical recognition of the spiritual unity of all religions, and the broad-minded tolerance and mutual respect which grow out of this recognition. The warring races have to be welded into a nation by turning the memories of strife into memories of common pride.

A common Religion is not possible for

India, but a recognition of a common basis for all religions, and the growth of a liberal, tolerant spirit in religious matters, are possible. It is this liberal tolerant spirit which makes nationality possible in Western countries; Christianity is divided into many more sects than is Hindûism, in addition to the deep lines of cleavage which divide Catholics from Protestants. But these do not interfere with patriotism. In England, France and Germany large numbers of men are unbelievers, but they are none the less good patriots. The bitter religious antagonisms of Italy have not prevented the building of united Italy. Nor need religious differences in India check the building of an Indian nation, if men of all creeds will sink their religious hatreds, and recognise that the God they all worship is the God of humanity, and not a tribal or national deity.

But while a common Religion is impossible, common Languages and a common Literature are possible. For the Muhammadan, Arabic will take the place of Sanskrit, but English is as necessary to him as to the Hindû, and Hindi is his Urdu, stripped of Persian derivatives and written in a different script. In literature he can as heartily enjoy Hindû masterpieces as the Hindû can delight in

those born of Islâm. Both belong to the Indian nation, and form its common literature.

Geography has a determining influence on nationality, for true nations cannot co-exist on the same soil. A nation must have its national territory, and we cannot have a Hindû nation, a Mussulmân nation, in India; we must have one Indian nation from the Himâlayas to Cape Comorin, from Bengal to Kathiawâr. Now such a nation has never yet existed, and "India" always has been, and still is, a mere geographical expression. Old India was divided into many States, large and small, and though occasionally, in ancient days, an emperor would be recognised and all the kings became his feudatories, such an emperor ruled by force of his own great personality, and no one Empire endured, and passed from ruler to ruler for generations. Hence India is yet to be made a living reality, an organised entity, and you, the students of to-day with tens of thousands of your like throughout the land, you are to be the builders of India, and from your hands she will emerge—a nation. Let us look around, and take lessons in nation-building, and then you will see that turning Indian communities and races into a nation is by no means an impossible thing.

There are three European nations that may help us—the British, the German, the Italian, and the German most of all. Look at Great Britain. Her people are Kelts, Saxons, Danes, Normans, and their ancestors warred and slaughtered each other for long centuries. Scotland and England were hereditary foes, and a deep river of blood divided them more than the river Tweed. They were united under one Crown just three hundred years ago, after sixteen hundred years of warfare, yet to-day Englishmen are as proud of Bruce and of Wallace as are Scotsmen, and Scotsmen are as proud of Chaucer and Shakspere as are Englishmen, and both are equally lovers of Britain. Ireland is not yet fused into the nation, for the grass is green over Emmet's grave for only a century, and race and religion still divide. There the nation still is building, is not yet built.

Italy has swiftly grown into a nation, largely because of the magic of the great name of Rome and her old-world rule; she has become a nation during the lifetime of many of us, and one of the memories of my childhood is the heroic figure of Garibaldi amid the surging cheering crowds of London folk.

Germany has been made into a nation

before our very eyes, and is full of stirring national life and intense patriotic feeling, and Germany is, specially instructive for us, because there we see two religions, one in name but bitterly antagonistic in fact, facing each other, the Roman Catholic and the Lutheran, separated by memories of axe and fire, of cruelties more terrible than, and as recent as, the memories of hatred between Hindûs and Mussulmâns here. Yet now both Lutheran and Roman Catholic are brother-citizens of the Empire, and are Germans above all. The German nation is a fact, and it was born before our eyes.

How did Italy, how did Germany, become nations? By sentiment. That may strike you as strange, and yet not strange if you remember that Thought is the one creative power. There was no Italy. There was no Germany. But poets sang of the Fatherland, authors wrote of the Fatherland, and at last they sang the nation into birth, they sang the Dream into the Fact.

How shall the Indian nation be born? By sentiment also. A feeling is beginning to pervade her races that India is the motherland, and the Indian nation is already a Dream, an Ideal. She exists already in the World of Ideas; she will pass, she is passing,

into the World of Discussion; and thence she will be born into the World of Facts. This is the Law. This is the Path. First, the Idea, then the Popularisation, then the Fact.

How shall we smooth the path for her coming feet? We must make the history of India a common history, looking on all her great men as a common glory, on all her heroes as a common heritage. Hindûs must learn to be proud of Akbar, Mussulmâns of Shivaji. The history must lose its bitterness, as of foe against foe, and become the story of the common mother-land in the making, all parties contributing to the enrichment, and sharing in the results. The sense of having been conquered in a battle must pass, and the battle be regarded merely as an event that went to the shaping of the nation. Courage, vigour, strength, virility, these are the sweet fruit of war, grievous and terrible in the sowing; and these remain alike to conquerors and conquered, when once the sense of personal triumph has faded out of the one, and that of personal loss out of the other. Ours the task so to teach history as to show the use of the struggles to India, as to eradicate proud and injured feelings. Thus shall separateness and hatred pass, and

patriotism and love grow up. As boys struggle hard in a match, one side against the other, and afterwards forget the struggle and the bruises received, and use the strength and skill thus obtained in the team which represents the whole college, so must Indians forget the antagonisms of the war-games of the past, and let the wounds be only honourable scars, while they use their strength and skill for the nation.

It may be said: But if this be so, why not educate together the boys of different faiths, why have a Hindû College at Benares, a Muslim College at Aligarh? Because such separate education is the best for building a religious and moral character, and such characters, once moulded, will live together in peace and mutual respect in manhood. During the plastic years of boyhood it is best to mould and shape the character after its own type, to make the Mussulmân boy a good Mussulmân, the Hindû boy a good Hindû. When they are firm in their respective religions they can mix together as men, and gain, not lose, by the contact. Only they must be taught a broad and liberal tolerance, as well as an *enlightened* love for their own religion, so that each may remain Hindû or Mussulmân, but both be Indians. Just as

stones are shaped and fitted, and then built into their respective places in an edifice, so must these boys be shaped and fitted by their several religions to be built into the Indian nation.

Let us then hold up as an Ideal the Indian mother-land, the Indian nation; let us popularise the Idea, till the heart of each province throb in unison; then let her descend into the world of Facts; let the Indian nation be born.

India's Awakening

A Lecture delivered in 1910

BROTHERS: For many long years past I have urged on you, and on those like you in all parts of India, the necessity of a spiritual awakening before the awakening of a material prosperity becomes possible. You know that during many years past, since the Theosophical Society was established on these shores, the importance of religion, the necessity of spiritual knowledge, has been constantly insisted upon, has been constantly urged; and in doing this, those who brought the renewal of the message were only treading in the footsteps of their far-off predecessors, who have ever declared that from the Spirit come forth all things that exist, and that without the life of the Spirit not even animal, vegetable or mineral life were possible. That profound truth in the ancient philosophy of India is the only foundation for progress of every kind. One Spirit, and one only; one Life, and none other; every form from the one living Essence, every being rooted in the everlasting One.

In the past, I have sometimes traced for you the steps of India's descent; how from the time of her great spirituality, when the life of the Spirit was seen as the sun in the heavens, how from that time downwards, with the decay of spirituality, went also the decay of all desirable things. And I remember how often I have pressed upon you how first there came the lessening of the spiritual life, then the decay of the original side of intellectual thought, of the creative intelligence, and only when those had gone far down into the twilight, came the slow decay of material prosperity. You may remember that I have put it to you that the awakening, the reviving, of Indian life must follow the order in which the descent had gone. First of all, the reviving of true spirituality, of true religion, of the vital understanding of the profoundest truths of all existence; then, after that has made its way to an appreciable extent, then must come the training, the culture, the guidance of the intelligence, so that a wisely planned and wisely guided education might train the future workers of the land. I remember saying to you that when the spiritual life has again become potent, when the educational life has again become pervasive, then only can material prosperity

safely return. To men with the knowledge of the One, with the unselfishness which grows out of the realisation of the common life, to their hands only can be safely entrusted the material guidance of the people. It is along that line that Indian progress has gone for many a year past. First, the great revival of religion. It began with the revival of Buddhism in the island of Ceylon, where, as you may remember, education swiftly followed after the re-awakened faith. Then came the great revival of Hindûism, that has spread from one end of the land to the other from the Himâlayas to Tuticorin, and everywhere is recognised as a fact. Then followed the recognition that in a rightly directed education lay the only way of training for the mother-land citizens who would be worthy of her past and therefore capable of building her future; out of that will arise all the varied activities of a full and rich national life, and we shall see the nation, which India never yet has been, but which India shall be in the days that are dawning.

Now the change to the material awakening has come somewhat more swiftly than most of us expected. I should say it has come a little too soon, were it not that I believe that over the destinies of nations there are hands

so wise and so loving that guide, that nothing can really come either too soon or too late. But, to our eyes, looking with purblind vision, we should sometimes be almost inclined to say that events are travelling in India a little more rapidly than is well. For we need for the wise guiding of a material movement, men trained from boyhood in religion and in true wisdom, so that the brain may be balanced and calm, the hands strong and steady, for the moment you touch the popular mind and the popular heart you awaken forces that are apt to go beyond the control of wisdom, and it needs a nucleus of wise and steady thinkers in order that a popular movement may find its way aright.

Let us, then, at this moment of immense importance to India's future, consider what ought to be the line most wisely to be followed in the great rush which is coming upon us. I pause a moment on the sentence just uttered, of the hands that guide, and the wisdom and the love which shape a nation's destinies. It is no new thought to you, who have grown up in the atmosphere in which the celestial and the physical worlds are mingling—it is no new thought to you that the Devas, the Shining Ones, mingle in the affairs of men. Nor should it be a new

thought to you—although to many it may now seem strange—that every nation also has its own Devas who guide its affairs, who shape its present and its future.

Let me then remind you that in the vast unseen hierarchy who mingle in human affairs, there are Devas of many grades, as well as the great Rishis who are the planners and regulators of events. First of all, there is the plan of the Lord himself of Îshvara, the Ruler of the system, who sketches, in the dawn of the creative days, the plan of evolution along which His universe shall go. Out of the innumerable conceivabilities in the mind of the Supreme, some are chosen by the Îshvara, who builds a system, as the material for His system, and woven into the plan for His unfolding. No pen, save that of His finger, writes that wondrous drama, which slowly is unfolded in the history of the evolving universe, written so that none may change, written so that none may amend, written by a wisdom inconceivable to us, and by a love of which the deepest love of the human heart is but the faintest and most shadowy reflection.

Then the working out of that plan is given into the hands of those whom we may call His ministers, the great Ones who come into

the system, from systems long gone by, to co-operate with Him in the shaping of a new humanity ; into their hands His plan is given, and theirs the brains of wisdom and the hands of strength that bring that plan into the details that we call history. They plan out the working and give to every nation the acting of a part in that great plan ; to the Deva who rules the nation, and who has under his control a hierarchy of lesser Devas, that part is given to be worked out in the history of the people. Now the plan is for all humanity, and not for one nation only, and each nation, in turn, has its part to play ; each nation in turn is cast either for the moment's weal or the moment's woe ; and those only can read aright the history of humanity who know the powers that work behind the veil ; for you cannot manage a household unless you know the will of the householder, and before you can realise the wisdom of household guidance, you must know the wants of the children and of the other members of the house. So in the history of peoples you cannot judge by the Statesmen, the Generals, the Admirals, and the Monarchs, who all work out the various tasks that are given them to do. You must look behind them to those who guide, to the

great Householder, the supreme Gṛihastha of the system. When we come to India, we know that all this is true of India and of India's Ḍevā-King, who stands high above the nation and works out, millennium after millennium, the parts which are given to him for his nation to play in the world's history; these parts have outlined the nation's story through all the difficulties, the dangers, the humiliations of the past. On that I may not dwell long now. For the moment I leave them untouched, to turn to that which immediately concerns us. Now to the present and its working.

First of all, in order that India might again take her place amongst the nations of the world, mightier even than in the past—a glorious past—there came the spiritual messengers, the messengers who were to revive the varied religions of the land. That has been done to a great extent as regards Hindûism and Buddhism. But you must remember that the other religions must also have, and to some extent have had, each in its own place, the advantage of the same spiritual and enlivening influence. Look at the community called Zoroastrian, and see how it has of late years become spiritualising in its tendencies instead of materialising as

in the past. The great faith of Islâm is the one which only shows in a very limited measure the enlivening influence of the new spiritual impulse, yet there also the same working is beginning, and there also there are signs of the spreading of the same influence, so that Islâm also shall take her place, spiritually alive and spiritually potent, to bear her part in the re-shaping of India as she is to be. That work is not finished, in fact never will be finished, rather ever continuing, but all the first great steps are taken and success in that is assured.

Passing to education, there an immense amount has been done, and far more has yet to be done, as I shall put it to you in a few moments. We have only begun the very A B C of the educational reform which is necessary in order to make India what she should be. Now, when a nation does not move sufficiently swiftly along the path of progress, when she does not rouse herself enough to the voice that appeals, that warns, and that counsels, then the Deva of the nation takes other means in hand, in order to awaken his people and make them see along what lines their path should be trodden. And these other means used by the Deva are goads. They are like the whip that touches

the horse when he is too lazy, and what you look on as national misfortunes, as things that you even cry out against with insistence and with passion, these are very often, rightly seen, the goads which make a nation move a little faster towards the goal on which the Deva's eyes are fixed. This is especially true just now, and will serve my purpose well as an illustration with regard to education. Education is a matter that belongs to the nation when rightly understood. Fathers and guardians are the people who ought to fashion the national education. How long have I been urging upon you to take this matter of education into your own hands, and not leave it for others to guide and plan. How long, in my travels up and down through the country, have I urged upon you the importance of this question of national education. I remember how about three years ago when I spoke in Bombay, I urged on every man and on every woman, mother and father, that on them lay the heavy responsibility of the education and the training of the child. I remember how there I urged upon you that your own interests, if nothing else, should stir you to the guidance of your children's education; for you do not want to continue to overcrowd, as you are doing, the

ranks of the so-called learned professions and the ranks of the Government service. Those are not things which make nations great, however necessary they may be, and however necessary they are, for the mechanism and administration of the nation. The things that make a nation great, from the material standpoint, are not the learned professions and Government service, but scientific agriculture, well-devised manufactures, thoughtfully planned arts and crafts, and the innumerable forms of workmanship that go to the building up of national wealth. But along the lines on which education has been going on, this has been left on one side, and, mind you, the blame for that does not lie on the Government; it lies on the people. It is useless and idle to blame Government, when you are the people who can do it, if you have the heart, the will, and the perseverance. Out of your pocket comes every rupee that the Government spends on education. Out of your pocket come the far too few rupees that build the colleges and schools, save the missionary establishments. If instead of sending your boys to Government colleges and missionary schools, you built your own schools, and had your own teachers, you might guide education exactly as you

would. It is not that there is not money enough in the country. I know it is said that India is poor; so she is in a sense poor, that is as regards the masses of her people. But not too poor to build colleges and schools for your children, while you are able to maintain, as you are doing, large crowds of men as mendicants, in the full strength of vigorous life, who are innocent of all sacred learning, innocent of the light, who have nothing of the Sannyâsî but the cloth that covers them, and who are yet fed and sheltered by the crore. India is not poor so long as your Chetties and Banias can give lakhs upon lakhs of rupees for the restoration of ancient temples and the gilding of their pinnacles. You do not need to increase your charities, that is not wanted; but oh! if you would only turn them into channels that fertilise instead of channels that corrupt, India would have wealth enough to educate her sons and daughters, and to make possible a new life in the future.

I do not speak against the restoration of temples. That is well. It is well that man should worship, rightly, nobly and rationally. I do not speak against the restoration of temples, but I do speak against the mere restoration that leaves the priesthood ignorant

and profligate. I do speak against the restoration of a temple where no school lives under its shadow, and where children are not taught by those whose duty it is to teach—less gilding on the pinnacles of temples, and more gilding of learning in the hearts of boys and girls. And if you still keep your temples in order, but spend some of the money that is wasted on vast crowds of idle mendicants on the education of your children, how rapidly would India rise in the scale of nations, and how quickly she would claim her right place among the peoples of the world.

And that is your work. Last year in speaking on "Theosophy in Relation to Politics," I urged upon you the formation of Educational Boards in every district of India. Now Government has nothing to do with that. You do not need to ask for Government permission or authority. You have only to gather a few of your cleverest men and princes together and make them into an Educational Board, for a definitely outlined area. What is wanted is not Government help. It is your work. What is wanted is self-devotion, energy, initiative, the willingness to go through years of drudgery; for only in that way can true education be built

up. This has not yet been acted on. The idea, when spoken about anywhere, causes a good deal of cheering, but only in a few places has there been any real earnest work, even in starting an Indian school. Hence a goad was needed, and it has been applied. An Education Commission goes all round the country. The Education Commission presents its report, and the representative of the vast majority of those whose children have to be educated under the new law presents a minority report—a minority of one. Now certainly, if you weigh heads instead of counting them, that minority might outweigh many, for that one was Mr Justice Gurudâs Bannerji. He knew very well what sort of education was wanted by the people, but he was only one, and the English majority shaped the Education Bill, and passed the Act. When it was passed, a number of very wise protests were made—thoughtful, well-considered, and rational; but why only protests? Why were not the protests followed by the formation of Boards, which should do that which the protestors wished? The protest was wisely made. Such protests are necessary, but they should be followed by action, for thought that is not followed by action acts like a gangrene in the human mind. Better remain

silent, better not even think, if you are not prepared to act; better not think, unless you are prepared to put your activity into action, for in the higher spheres, as you know, thought produces action; down here, thought and especially talk, without action, does not get a nation very far along the line of progress. So all the energy flows out in the talk, and nothing is done. The national Deva thought something more in the way of pressure was wanted, and the Education Act became law. And very well it did. You do not approve of it, nor do I; but still it was wanted, because nothing else would stir the people into action. That was why I said that where a people would not move by exhortation and advice, some goad was used in order to stir them into activity. Now that you find education has become dearer, that to educate the boys strains to breaking the narrow incomes of the fathers; now that you see Higher Education is being more and more blocked to the class that needs it most —a class hereditarily learned, but always poor and now largely shut out from the costly education of the day; now that the education question has come in this form: "You must take this costly education or nothing"—you must begin to say: "No, it

shall not be nothing. It shall be something, created by my own hands and out of my own money and brains." But in order that the goad may serve its purpose well, it is necessary that there should be hot and bitter feelings in the hearts of many of the people affected. It is that which makes the steam that drives the engine. It is that which presently makes the piston to go backwards and forwards and the wheels to turn. It is that which gives force, though it also causes an immense amount of excitement and foolish talk. These things are necessary, in order to generate the forces which make the engine of the nation move. So that, the Education Act is, as I regard it, a goad to make us struggle against it, as we are obliged to struggle at Benares, in keeping our fees low. I am glad it has passed, because it has—I hope it has—given the impulse which will make men take the education of their children into their own hands.

But now, how? By beginning at the right end and not at the wrong. First by making your Educational Boards all over the country; next by creating colleges and universities, and most of all by making such a public opinion, especially among the Indian princes, the great merchants, and employers of labour,

as shall induce them to recognise the degrees given by the Indian universities as valid credentials for those who are seeking employment. Until you have done that, you have done nothing. It is no good even making a university, unless you have made a body of people who are prepared to take its graduates when they have taken their degrees, and thus open to them means of livelihood. It is no good beginning with boys. You must begin with men.

Now I will tell you why I object to boys being thrown into political conflicts. They may ruin their whole lives in a sudden surge of excitement, and in their manhood bitterly reproach those who took advantage of their inexperience. While education is under the control of Government, and the fate of every boy is in the hands of the officials of his town, it is cruel to fling the lads against them. A boy dismissed from school or college, and refused a leaving certificate, has his education ruined and his future livelihood destroyed. When people unaccustomed to political action suddenly plunge into it, they are apt to think after they act instead of before. Here lies one of the dangers in India's Awakening, and that is why I said, I fear it has come too soon. Those who are trained in politics, as in my

past life I have been—for I have taken a large part in the political struggles of the people in England, and I worked there in difficult times side by side with my old friend, Mr. Charles Bradlaugh—make it, as we made it, one of the rules of political life never to tell another man to go where there was risk, where we did not go in front; never to tell a procession to go where there was danger, unless we walked in front, so that we should be the first people on whom blows fell. It was the glory of Charles Bradlaugh, when he lay on his death-bed, that despite his struggles and difficulties, there was not one home that had been made desolate by him, not one man who had gone to jail for the work that he had asked him to do. The front is the place of the leader; it is the place of the man, and not the place of the boy.

There is another reason why it is bad to send boys to the front. 'There can be no wise politics without thought beforehand. People who shout first and think afterwards make a mob, they do not make a political party; and that is the thing that the boy does. How much do you think a boy of this height (pointing to a boy about four feet) knows about the good or the evil of the Partition of Bengal? He shouts out and

protests. It is bad training for the future. In the College, students should discuss political questions, social questions and economic questions. They should debate them, discuss them, and talk them over in every possible way. We train them to do that in the Central Hindû College. But we do not allow them to protest against the Government. And the reason is a very simple one. When they have discussed these questions beforehand, when they have talked them over, then, when they have gone out into the world, they will be ready to form rational opinions. But if, before they study and understand the questions of the day, they shout their approval or disapproval out of empty heads, they make a great deal of noise, but noise of no value, like bladders which, when beaten, make a noise, but collapse if you prick them with a pin. I do not want India to work along those lines. Train your boys to think first and then to form opinions, not to call out first and then wonder what they have been shouting for. That is bad moral training. It puts boys on wrong lines, and it takes away that profound sense of responsibility which ought to be at the heart of everyone who mingles in political life. For, remember what playing at politics means.

Remember that it means playing with property; it means playing with liberty; it means playing with the lives of men. Leaders in the political arena have to remember all that, when they take the responsibility of calling men to action. When you have a man like Mr. Gokhale, who has trained himself by years upon years of study and of self-denial, by his self-sacrificing work in the Fergusson College, for twenty years on Rs. 75 a month and a retiring pension of Rs. 25 a month—when you have a man trained in that way, and who studies every subject to the very bottom before he speaks about it, then you have a man who may be trusted and of whom a nation may well be proud, a worthy leader in the political arena.

In the matter of education, why not begin to act? You know you send your boys still by thousands and thousands to missionary schools, and it is a disgrace—not to the missionaries, for they are doing work which they honestly think to be to the glory of God and for the good of all men; they believe that their religion is much better than yours, and I am bound to say that they love it better, because they work for it much harder, as a rule. You ought to remember that your religion is the oldest of all living re-

ligions, and the most perfect in its range and in its details. Surely, it is not for you to take the children, whose bodies you have given, and, robbing them of their birthright, put them into other hands and mould them in an anti-Indian fashion. The missionaries do not make many Christians. Here and there they do, as in Trichinopoly, but, as a rule, they do not make many converts. But I tell you what they do. They dig up the roots of devotion and religion in the plastic soil of the boy's heart. They wither them with ridicule, they trample them down with sarcasm, and when the boy grows up, he grows up an unbeliever in all religion, a bad Hindû and not a Christian—a kind of hybrid, who is of no use to his country. When you despiritualise an Indian, you denationalise him. Why does that go on? *Because you do not care.* It sounds hard to say so, but it is true. If you cared, it would not last for another month. What does it want to bring about the change? A few men in every town to band themselves together into an Educational Committee; a few rich merchants to be visited and asked to subscribe so much per month for some years, and then the putting up of a building for a school, and the sending of the boys. There is one difficulty in your way—the

shall be given in Arts and Science, and in industries that are useful for the national unfolding.

I see they are now going to teach French and German, Latin and Greek. Very useful, no doubt. So many of you will want to go to France, and talk French in Paris. So many of you will want to go to Germany, and enter into trade concerns there. Latin and Greek you may want to read, in order to understand mediæval Christian writers, I suppose, for your spiritual training. Unless this absurdity is the idea, it is difficult to see why they should be preferred to Sanskrit and Arabic, for Sanskrit is as good and as intellectual a training as either of these two languages—Greek being but a child of Sanskrit—and Arabic is the language in which the Middle-Age learning of Islâm is embodied. Our Mussulmân brothers are not at present wise enough to vindicate Islâmic learning by translating the treasures of that knowledge, which from Bagdad spread into Europe. Arabic and Sanskrit, these are the two classical languages for India, not Latin and Greek. Instead of French and German, you should teach English and one vernacular, one common language which would serve everywhere as a means of communication

between educated and uneducated alike. You ought to make Hindi a second language throughout the land. I have heard it said that Tamil has a literature which is magnificent, and this must certainly not be left to die. But in addition to the boy's own vernacular, he should always learn Hindi, for that is the most widely spread vernacular of the country, and one can go from one end of the land to the other and talk in Hindi to all, save the most illiterate people in every part of it. If you had Sanskrit or Arabic, according to the religion of the boy, Hindi as a common tongue, a thorough knowledge of his own vernacular, and then the necessary English for all dealings with foreign countries, and in Government and Court matters, you would have an education, so far as languages are concerned, that would make a boy ready for the future, and enable him to take up his work in the world as soon as he goes into it.

The most important thing, which I have often urged, is technical education, and above all thorough education in agriculture. Unfortunately you have got only one general business here, namely, agriculture. At least it might be made very much better than it is at present, so that famines, which are a recurring horror in the land, might be

prevented. Famines are preventable things, and things that ought to be prevented. But they can only be prevented by a wiser system of agriculture on the one hand, and by the building up of manufacturing industries throughout the land on the other.

But, mind you, the manufactures that you want are the manufactures of this country. Here arts and crafts are fast dying. Your weaving craft is dying out of existence, because its products are not bought. That brings me to the next point, for education here slips into economics. Why is it that the weavers of cloths, the potters, the metal workers, and the makers of beautiful objects of all kinds, the weavers of shawls in Kâshmîr, and of muslins, silks, in other parts of the land, why are they slowly disappearing? These people, who, by heredity, are fitted for the work, are swelling the ranks of the agricultural labourers, starving the land and overcrowding the fields. Why this? Because for many many years you have been wearing foreign goods in preference to home-made ones. It should not have wanted the Partition of Bengal to teach you to produce at home what you need. When you think of it, the Svadeshi movement has nothing to do with that. Whether Bengal

has one Lieutenant-Governor, or two, may be a point of serious importance to the population over whom they rule. But the Partition of Bengal was not wanted to make the Svadeshi movement. The Svadeshi movement was not born after the Partition. It has been going on for years and up and down the country, but the difficulty was that only a few people were in favour of it, and the great mass of the people were totally indifferent. One thing, of course, was that the foreign-made goods were cheaper, but also less durable. Assuming that they are cheaper, how stupid that they should be so! You grow cotton, you send the cotton to Lancashire, Lancashire spins and weaves it into cloths and sends them out here, and sells them cheaper than you can spin and weave your own cotton! There is something very badly managed in this, to say the least of it. If a thing can be sold more cheaply after paying all the freight to Lancashire and back, after paying high wages in England instead of small wages to Indian handloom weavers, it is certainly by some queer kind of upside-down management. I am not forgetting, of course, the unfair duties levied on Indian mills for the benefit of Lancashire, and other difficulties that occur

to your minds. But they do not touch your village weaving industry at You should have gone on supporting the Indian weaver, working in his own village, and giving you lasting and well-made cloths. If that had been done, the village weavers would have remained prosperous, and that prosperity would have re-acted on the agriculturists, and so with everything else. Fashion has been more powerful than patriotism. Now, thanks to the Partition of Bengal, poor patriotism has a chance. But the present enthusiasm for Svadeshi goods will only be a flare like the blaze of twigs, easily lighted and quickly dying out, unless a principle underlies the movement and not a passing political irritation. No durable things are built on violent passion. Nature grows her plants in silence and in darkness, and only when they have become strong do they put their heads above the ground.

Now I am glad of all this excitement, for, as I said before, it generates steam. It has made the Svadeshi movement a far more living movement than it was. So I am very glad of it. I am glad to see all the froth and the bubble and the fuss. Some of them are very foolish, I admit, but still it means life

instead of stagnation. What all good men should set their faces against is any attempt to put forcible pressure on people to do what others think that they ought to do. Wear Svadeshi clothes, as I have been urging you to do for years, but if your neighbour chooses to wear an English coat, argue with him, tell him it is unpatriotic, but do not tear it off his back. That sort of violence has ruined some good movements in England, and it is always wrong. None has the right to force other people to tread his own path against their will. Every man has a right to choose, to follow, his own judgment. Convince him by argument and reasoning. Tell him that his conduct is unpatriotic, wrong and irrational; tell him he is making other countries rich while he starves his own. But do not carry on a mad crusade against everything English, especially with the help of the boys. Appeal to a man's brains. Surely there is argument enough: without home manufactures, there is no prosperity; without home manufactures, there are recurring famines; without home manufactures, there are overcrowded unproductive professions and undermanned industrial pursuits.

Every one of you can quietly, in his own town, go against the craze for foreign goods,

and help forward Indian manufactures. It is so easy to do. Sometimes there is a little more trouble, I admit; sometimes I have had to wait patiently for four or five days, or even weeks, before I could get an Indian-made thing, when I could have got a foreign-made one in a moment; but if you cannot be patient for the sake of building up the industrial prosperity of your country, what a poor thing your patriotism must be. Help this movement in every way that you can, save by ways that are wrong; for remember that the Devas are behind all national policies, and therefore that the wrong way is always the long way, and useless.

Utilise the enthusiasm of the moment by turning it into wisely planned channels. Band yourselves together, for co-operation strengthens and helps enthusiasm. Use the crafts and products of this country in preference to others. But be a little patient. If you find that Government, which has been favourable to this movement, is now frowning on it in one part of the country, remember that, after all, that is quite natural under the conditions that have arisen. Governments are not perfect, any more than the governed. After all, Governments are only men, just as you are, with the same faults and the same

short-sightedness. Therefore the Government should learn to be patient with the governed, and the governed with the Government. Now in the past, Government has been favourable to the Svadeshi movement, and it will be so again. Naturally, for Government does not want famines in the land; it does not want the people to be poor, for, apart from all questions of humanity, if they are poor they cannot pay much in the way of taxes. It is to the advantage of Government that you should be rich; therefore it will help the movement again, when things are quieter; just now, it has been made into a political battle-cry, but that will pass. Politics are constantly changing, one burning question to-day and another to-morrow. Go on quietly and steadily without any fuss, building up your Indian manufactures, educating your sons. You think brains are wanted for pleading; much more brains are wanted for carrying on large agricultural and industrial concerns. We want the brightest brains for the building up of Indian industries at the present time. If an Indian prince wants to have an electrical plant installed in his capital, he has to go to Europe to find an engineer who will set up for him his electrical machinery. That must be so, until you

educate your boys on the right lines. Educate them on all the lines of the learning wanted to make a nation great. Get rid of the stupid idea that it is good, from the standpoint of class, to be a starving pleader, and bad to be a flourishing merchant. It is a mistake. A nation that goes that way goes down. It is a man's business to make his livelihood respectable, and respectability grows not out of the nature of the livelihood but out of the man. A man of high character, of noble ideal, of pure life, can make any calling respectable, and do not forget that a calling which helps national prosperity is more respectable than a calling which does not. That is a lesson that has to be learned in modern India.

Many resent the changes which are coming about, but although many of them be not along the lines of the ancient civilisation, yet it must be remembered that the spirit of this time, as much as that of any other, is the Divine spirit. In whatever form it clothes itself, it is in the work of humanity to-day, as it was in the work of humanity in the past, to help humanity onwards, or to make it step forward in the right way. But it is not the right way now to tread only in the footprints of the past, simply to re-introduce what has

been. Your duty is to be inspired by the same spirit that made the past great, and in that spirit to shape the form suitable for the India of to-morrow.

Why should you be afraid to tread a new path? What is the creator of every form save the spirit? Why then be afraid to go on with the life, and to leave dead forms behind? And the strange thing is that often men cling most passionately to the forms which do not really belong to the life, but which are only excrescences which have happened to grow up round the living forms, as barnacles grow on a ship's bottom, and can be knocked off without harming the ship. There is one rule that helps us in distinguishing customs that are only barnacles from the vessel that carries the life. That is to be preserved which is ancient, according to the Shâsṭras, and universal. But that which is local, partial, modern, not according to the Shâsṭras, these are the things which may indeed have been useful at the time of their formulation, but are now the useless and even mischievous barnacles on the ship. Trust to life, to the living spirit. We were not there to guide the life, when it made the glorious past. Life can be trusted, for it is divinely guided, and all we have to do is to

co-operate with it. That is the idea you must have above all things. Life is something greater than yourselves; you are only one tiny part of life, and the life makes its own forms. Study its tendencies and work with them, but it is life that builds, not men. Then you co-operate in the building of the forms, and if a form does not succeed it will be broken; and you should be glad in the breaking of the useless form as you should be glad in the form that means success. Failure often means winning, and it needs dozens, nay hundreds, of attempts before the perfect masterpiece shines out in full. Trust life; that is the great lesson for these days of change, for change is coming, change from every side. Those changes that are good will endure, and you must be very patient while they are in the making. But full of hope and full of courage.

All men die. You may say: Is that encouraging? Surely yes, for when a man dies, his blunders, which are of the form, all die with him, but the things in him that are part of the life never die, although the form be broken.

There is a new form to be built here, a form which has never yet been built, and that is India herself as one nation. As one nation,

she exists in the world of spirit; as one nation, she exists in the world of mind. As one nation, she has never yet existed on the physical plane, but the day of her birth is near. Many States and Kings have been, many Mahârâjâs, Râjâs, and sometimes one Râjâ, great beyond his fellows, has held a wide imperial sway. But never yet has there been one India from north to south, from east to west. But she is coming. That one India, when she comes, will have her head crowned with the Himâlayas, and her feet will be bathed in the waters that wash the shores of Tuticorin; she will stretch out her right hand to Burma and Assam, and her left hand to Kathiawar and Beluchistan. That India has to be born. How? First, by believing in her with a strenuous faith, for faith is a mighty power; and then by thinking of her and aspiring after her as an ideal. For what a man thinks becomes actual in practice. And never yet was a nation born that did not begin in the spirit, pass to the heart and the mind, and then take an outer form in the world of men. That India, the sound of her feet is on the mountains, and soon the rising eastern sun shall glow upon her forehead. Already she is born in the mind of men.

But let your thought for unity be potent

and resolute; learn to drop sectarian divisions; learn to drop provincial divisions and animosities; leave off saying: "I am a Madrasi; I am a Punjabi; I am a Bengali; I am an up-country man"; leave all that behind and teach your boys and girls to say "I am an Indian." Out of the mouths of the children thus speaking shall be born the India of to-morrow. Many religions will grow within her; not only her own parent religion, but others too will be woven into her being. Hindû and Mussulmân must join hands, for both are Indians. Hindûs, Mussulmâns, Parsis, Christians, must join hands, for all are Indians. In the India of the future, all men of every faith must join. If India is to be the spiritual light of the future, in her must be focussed the light that comes from every faith, until in the prism of India they are all united into the one light which shall flood with sunlight the world, and all lights shall blend in the Divine Wisdom. That is our work. My Brothers, I am now talking to you, but this thing will not be made by talking. It is made by living. I would not dare to speak to you and offer you counsel, if I did not strive to live that which I advise. Day by day, week by week, month by month, I strive to shape my life on the noble models which may serve the land, and

in serving India will serve Humanity; for greater than any land is Humanity, and greater than any one people is the race of whom all people are but branches; and if we have such hopes of future India, it is because we believe that her coming will be a new light to the world. There was an old people in the ancient days, and not very ancient either, that was conquered, and apparently cast away. One person of that race cried out: "If the fall of them be the riches of the world . . . what shall the receiving of them be but as life from the dead?" If India's humiliation has, in a very real sense, been the riches of the world—for this has been the means of spreading India's thoughts in the most widely-spoken tongue of the world, to the north and south, east and west, all round the habitable globe—what shall it be for humanity when India herself in her new glory is born into the world? India, from whose lips, in this land of the Ṛiṣhis, came the religion that uplifts and spiritualises, the philosophy that illumines, and the science that trains; India, from whose mind, throughout the world of mind, came those great systems of thought which are now recognised as the noblest products of the human intellect; India, whose feet once passed through many States, and made every

one of them fertile, prosperous, and wealthy; India, who was perfect in spirit and mind; when that India is born into the full vision of the eyes of men, perfect in body, is it too much to say that her coming will be as life from the dead? That is the glorious goal, for which we work; that is the splendid hope, that cheers our labour; that is the sublime aspiration, that rises perpetually to the ears of the Devas. For India's coming means the spiritualising of humanity; India's thinking means the lifting of thought on to a higher level; India's prosperity shall be the justification of religion, the justification of philosophy, as part of the life of a nation; and the world shall be redeemed from materialism because India is awake.

Religion and Patriotism in India

A Contribution to the "Hindûstan Review," June 1907

NOW that the spirit of nationality is most happily spreading throughout the Indian mother-land, the words are often heard, "We can never have an Indian nation, so long as different religions dominate her peoples." Patriotic and public-spirited men ask, almost despairingly: "How can we weld together the Hindûs and the Muhammadans, the Parsis and the Christians, into a nation?" So strongly is this difficulty felt among Indian patriots, that a thoughtful and forceful party are striving to weaken the hold of religion at least on the educated classes, so that the divisions may be more easily overstepped, the gulf more readily spanned. Many who have been educated along the lines of the so-called English education—though I have often pointed out that English education in its native land is permeated with religion—have become thoroughly secularised, and regard those who work for the revival of

religion as enemies of Indian nationality, however well-intentioned such workers may be.

Religion, thrust out of school and college, is largely thrust out of life. Ignored as an essential part of education during the years wherein the heart is most ductile and the brain is most plastic, it is unable, in later years, to assert its power over the maturer brain and harder heart of middle-age. The Western philosophical lines of the last half of the nineteenth century, repudiated by the most recent thought of the twentieth, are being still followed in Indian educational institutions, and materialise the naturally idealistic Indian brain. The young Indian, Hindû and Mussulmân, naturally finds himself out of touch with the religion of his fathers—as explained by pandits and moulvis who have kept the ceremonial and lost the inner knowledge—and, as naturally, seeks to get rid of religious differences by ignoring religion. "Let us forget that we are Hindûs, Mussulmâns, Parsis, Jains, Sikhs; let us only remember that we are Indians, and put religion on one side." There is much that is true and noble in this cry, and religious differences *must* be put on one side in the service of the common mother-land; but in

trying to shape and mould a nation, the lessons of history should not be cast aside. Men cannot be dealt with as we deal with clay, and nation-building has to deal with men ; clay may be shaped by the artist's deft fingers according to his fancies, and will take the forms he imposes ; but men are living intelligences, with passions, emotions, imperious cravings, and the mere closet-politician finds his human clay re-acting with violence against his ideas, and smashing into a thousand pieces the unsuitable mould into which he has forced it. Let those who think that religion can be put out of public life by their order look around them now, if they will not look backward over the past, and they will see that religion, in the most progressive nations of the present, is a force which politicians must recognise, and with which statesmen must reckon. As well might an engineer ignore the steam generated within his engine, and close the safety-valve, as statesmen ignore the religious force which is generated within human nature, and which—if not allowed to act as propulsive energy—wrecks nations as it forces its way out.

Look across to France, a country which stands in the forefront of civilisation, pre-eminently the country of ideas, and you see

France—democratic France, republican France —on the verge of a civil war on a purely religious question. Paris is struggling against Rome; Rome is anathematising Paris. Ministries fall over religious questions. Moderate men despair, because of the passions generated by the extremists alike on the side of Catholicism and anti-Catholicism. Royal France, in the name of religion, persecuted free-thinkers: Republican France, in the name of Free Thought, is persecuting Catholics. Years ago Charles Bradlaugh, who was a real free-thinker, broke with his French republican friends when they began to persecute the French monastic orders. To him Free Thought was a principle, not a set of anti-religious dogmas, and he abhorred the enforcement of any thought by penalty instead of by argument. He resented atheistic persecution of Christians as much as he resented Christian persecution of atheists. It is true that in the history of France, Christianity has cruelly persecuted some of its own sectaries; it is true that massacres and edicts of exile have begotten hatred of Christianity in the minds of French secularists; but here, as everywhere, the great word of the Buddha is true: "Hatred ceaseth not

by hatred at any time: hatred ceaseth by love." The outcome of the persecution of Christianity in France can only be a new crop of persecution of anti-Christianity in the future, and so on and on, until one side, when in power, has the splendid strength to say: "I have power to persecute, but I forgive." Then only will cease the civil strife, and France be set free to move on peaceful lines. But, looking at France, can anyone say that religion may be ignored in civil and political life? Ere that may be, human nature must be entirely changed, and statesmen must deal with human nature as it is. Till you can kill the religious feeling in man, you cannot safely ignore religion in national life.

Look at England. England is rent in twain over the question of religious education. A Ministry, elected by a large popular majority, is threatened with defeat. It is on the verge of a great constitutional struggle; the very basis of the constitution is menaced; the House of Lords is imperilled. And all this because Churchmen want to teach a certain form of dogmatic Christianity, and Nonconformists a more liberal form. Englishmen are fairly sober in their political life; yet after generations of political training, the nation

goes mad over a religious question, and threatens to wreck its long-tried constitution. And if this be so, can it be seriously contended that in India, where, for thousands of years, religion has entered into every family and social event of life, religion can be ignored? If there is to be an Indian nation, Patriotism and Religion must join hands in India, and help and strengthen each other. To strive to thrust Religion aside is but wasted labour. In the sequel I shall try to show a better way.

But before dealing with that way, we may learn from history another lesson. Strong religious feelings of different kinds do *not* prevent the building of a nation. We speak of the religious antagonism between Hindûs and Muhammadans, and references are made to persecutions, unfair taxes, etc., going back to the Mughal Empire. But if we look across to Europe at the same time, we see similar persecutions going on, in England, in France, in Germany. Religionists were murdering each other in Europe as eagerly as in India. In England, under "bloody Queen Mary"—the history was written by Protestants—Roman Catholics burned Protestants; under her sister, "glorious Queen Bess," Protestants pressed Roman Catholics to death by daily increasing the weight of

stones which crushed them. Not much to choose between them in point of bloodshed! In Ireland, the penal laws against Roman Catholics—far more cruel than any Muhammadan laws against Hindûs—lasted into the second quarter of the nineteenth century. But none of these things have prevented the growth of England into a nation; Roman Catholics and Protestants now live side by side under equal laws, and when any peril menaces the mother-land, none says "I am Roman Catholic"; none says "I am Protestant"; but a common cry rings out: "I am English." In Germany, Rome and Luther struggled for the mastery, and blood was poured out like water; yet, within our own lifetime, Germany has become a nation, and the German Fatherland is dear alike to Catholic and Lutheran.

Roman Catholics and Protestants are as antagonistic as Hindûs and Muhammadans; year after year, in the north of Ireland, they break each other's heads in the streets of Derry, as here there are riots between Hindûs and Mussulmâns. Why should riots here interfere with nationality more than riots there, and why should not a nation grow into unity with diverse creeds in India, as nations have grown into it with diverse creeds

in Europe? The day will come when, in a national crisis, Hindû, Mussulmân and Parsi will forget their religious differences, and will remember only that they are Indians, children of one mother-land.

But the final answer as to all these differences of religions, the answer which will close the gulf, is that men of all faiths have far more in common than they have in separation. They are really all of one Religion, though its truths may be labelled in different tongues. Religion is the uprising of the human spirit to its source, the seeking of the Universal by the Particular Self, the effort of the part to unite with the whole. Religion belongs to the spiritual world. Religions are the intellectual formulations of this truth and of the methods of reaching it; the intellect formulates a spiritual truth into a mental concept, and thereby narrows it. The many-faced spiritual truth is defined by the intellect as to each of its faces, and each religion has its own formulations. One in nature, one in essence, the human emanations of the Divine seek re-union. That seeking is Religion. Many the names by which God has been called, many in the dead religions of the past, many in the living religions of the present; every name represents a special conception of

God, but the Universal Self includes and blends them all. When the Muhammadan says Allah, he means God as revealed in Al Quran; when the Hebrew says Jehovah, he means God as revealed in the Old Testament; when the Christian says Father, Son and Holy Ghost, he means God as revealed in the New Testament: when the Hindû says Îshvara, he means God as revealed in the Upanishads. But who may name the One, save as the Self, the Life of all that is? As religions know themselves but as branches of one tree, they will cease to divide their adherents from one another, and all religions will be sects in one Religion, as many tribes make a single nation.

In the past, Religion and Patriotism have been the two aspects of one thing—loyalty to the State. A tribe has had a religion, and faithfulness to the tribe and faithfulness to its religion were one and the same thing. Each tribe had its own God, and the patriot served the tribal God; the apostate from the religion was the traitor to the tribe. In the Hebrew Bible this comes out strongly, and the wars of the Jews against the Canaanites and the Philistines are wars of Jehovah against the Gods of Canaan and Philistia. A Hebrew who "went after strange Gods"

was a traitor to his nation. In imperial Rome there was the Temple called the Pantheon, where were enshrined the national Deities of the subject peoples, and all good Romans, with a true imperial instinct, reverenced the Gods of all the nations in the Empire.

How good would it be that history would repeat itself, and that in imperial London, centre of an empire mightier than that of Rome, should rise a group of buildings, the temples of the Hindû and the Buddhist, the fire-temple of the Parsi, the Church of the Christian, the mosque of the Muslim—all religious branches of one Religion, and all national patriotism blending into one imperial patriotism.

As tribes united into a nation, the tribal Deities formed the court of the national God. The Ruler of the State was the Priest of the God, and still Patriotism and Religion were the two aspects of loyalty to the State. Traitor and apostate were still convertible terms. Thus the world lived during hundreds and thousands of years, and only during the last centuries have Patriotism and Religion been divided, by the claim of one religion—first the Christian, then the Muhammadan—to be world-embracing. "Disregarding all

national boundaries, these religions built walls which were not conterminous with the limits of the nations, and violently wrenched apart the twin-sisters who had dwelt so long in peace within each national area. With this claim of uniqueness and universality has arisen the fierce spirit of bigotry and fanaticism, until the Indian Muhammadan feels more akin to his brother Muslim of Turkey than to his Indian-born brother who is a Hindû, and the Indian Christian feels more patriotism for Christian England than for Hindû and Muhammadan India. This is the real difficulty; we have a Pan-Islâm, and a Pan-Christendom, dragging Indians away from India, and making the centre of their life extra-national. Thus are religions made agents for national disruption, and religious exclusiveness destroys love of country. It is the exclusiveness that is the enemy, and not Religion. Therefore must the warring religions learn their unity, and when they feel themselves to be one, they will strengthen, not weaken, Patriotism.

This lesson will be learned in India first, and through India in the world, because here alone are all the great religions found living side by side. They must be reconciled, in one of two ways. An attempt may be made

to deaden religious feeling, to get rid of warmth, energy, devotion, to slay the love of the Hindû for Hindûism, of the Mussulmân for Islâm, of the Parsi for Zoroastrianism, of the Christian for Christianity; were this possible—but it is not possible—we should have a nation of corpses, not of living men; Religion is the life of the nation as it is the life of the man. Without it, as history shows, there is no first-class literature, art, or high morality. Mr Gokhale truly said that no great thing is done save by renunciation, and the spring of renunciation is Religion. The second way is to see in each religion a branch of a single tree; to act on the saying of Shrī Kṛṣhṇa: "On whatever road a man approaches me, on that road do I welcome him, for all roads are mine"; of Muhammad the Prophet: "We make no differences between prophets"; of the Sufis: "The ways to God are as many as the breaths of the children of men."

When all men see that true Religion is knowledge of God and love of man, and that all religions are but methods of realising this in practice, then, as in England Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists and half a hundred others, all call themselves Christians, so in India

shall Hindûs, Buddhists, Muhammadans, Parsis, Christians, Jains, Sikhs, all call themselves branches of the one Religion, the Universal Religion of Wisdom—knowledge and love blended together.

As easily as Roman Catholics and Baptists in England meet and work together on a common political platform, may Hindûs and Muhammadans meet and work here on a common political platform. Both want good Government, both want to take part in the Government of their common country, both want increasing national prosperity. What matters it that one worships in a temple and the other in a mosque, if both are Indians and serving a single nation?

As there is one God with many names, there is one India with many sub-races and families. Why should Banglá Hindû and Banglá Muhammadan behave as though their interests were opposed, when they both are born of one India, are sons of one motherland? There is no religion which can be cast out of the nation's household. We may think of Christianity as the religion of the white races, and hence foreign. But in the south-west of India there are Christian towns and villages dating from the second or third century of the Christian era, and thus

have an Indian life of over 1600 years. They cannot be ostracised, or treated as step-children in the house of the Mother. And indeed, a nation is the richer, not the poorer, by varieties of thought, and not one jewel should be grudged its place in the necklet that adorns the Mother, whose most ancient possession is the jewel of the religion of the Universal Self. As many peoples must blend here into One Nation, so many religions must blend into the One Religion.

Religion is essential to patriotism because nothing else destroys the separative tendency in men, and prevents the disintegration of bodies of workers by continual subdivisions. Religion alone teaches man to feel his unity with his fellows, and leads him to sacrifice the smaller to the larger Self. Unless the isolation brought about by antagonistic self-interests can be destroyed by religion, nationality will ever remain a dream. It is religion which has ever bound individuals into a tribe, and tribes into a nation. With the revival of religion in India has come the spread of a sense of brotherhood, of unity, of nationality. With the growth of religion, nationality has grown. With this more and more will come the spirit of self-sacrifice, the spirit that sacrifices itself as a part to the

whole, the only spirit that can make a nation. Love of family grows into love of village; love of village into love of district; love of district into love of province; love of province into love of nation. Ay, and love of nation shall grow into love of Humanity, and all religions blend one day in a Universal Religion. But as the various religions are still needed, and the next step is to see them as branches of One Religion, so various nations are still needed, and the next step is to see them as branches of Humanity, so that we may love all and hate none. At our stage of evolution, patriotism, love of one nation is a necessity, for each nation has to develop its own characteristics, in order that Humanity may show forth a many-sided perfection. The man who is not a patriot, unless he be a great Rishi or Sage, will be no true lover of Humanity. The man who has not evolved the smaller loves cannot really feel the larger. The indifferent husband and father is not the material out of which the good citizen is made; it is the man who is the good householder who is also the good citizen. The man who neglects the sanitary arrangements of his own house will not attend to those of the Municipality; and how shall the man who neglects the lighting, and draining, and

paving, of his own town, be trusted with the affairs of the province; and how shall he who cares nothing for the welfare of his province, be trusted with the affairs of the nation? How shall he who fails in the small, succeed in the great? The good father expands into the good citizen; the good citizen into the good provincial leader; the good provincial leader into the good national leader, and these, perchance in future lives, to the leaders of Humanity. The great lovers of Humanity love it with a passion such as that with which a mother loves her first-born son. Never, then, let a man fear that love to his mother-land will prevent him from loving Humanity. It is the road thereto; the heart expands as it is exercised.

Ungrudging love of the mother-land is, then, the thing needed. Vande Mataram; worship the Mother. But let it be remembered that while patriotism is the flower, service is the fruit, and patriotism must grow into service.

As men of every faith unite in social, civil and political work, they will bring the spirit of religion into all, and work with love and knowledge. Then shall India show the world that a nation may embrace all varieties

of thought, and only be the richer for the variety, and from India shall spread that spirit of knowledge and love which shall blend all nations into one Brotherhood of Humanity, and merge all religions in the WISDOM.

The Education of Hindû Youth

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NO more important question can occupy the attention of a nation than that of the education of the youth of both sexes, for as the immediate future lies in the hands of those who are now children, the direction of the national development depends on the training given to these embryo men and women. If they be brought up materialistically, without any care being bestowed on their spiritual and moral culture, the nation as a whole must become materialistic, for the nation of to-morrow is in the schools and homes of to-day.

What is the education necessary to give us spiritual, intellectual, moral, wisely progressive Hindû men and women; to form teachers, statesmen, merchants, producers, fathers, mothers, worthy to make part of a great Indian nation? Such is the question we must answer. Let us take separately the school education of boys and girls, re-

membering, however, that their joint education in the home, from the cradle onwards, should come from the example and the lips of fathers and mothers, themselves full of spirituality and forming a spiritual atmosphere which shall permeate the dawning mind. No after-training can compensate for the lack of religion in the home, the saturation of children's minds and hearts with pure religion, and with the exquisite stories with which Indian literature abounds —tales of heroism, devotion, self-sacrifice, compassion, love, reverence. A child should not be able to remember a time when he was not familiar with the melodious names of Indian saints and heroes, both men and women. But we are concerned with the education given in the schools, and first with that of the boys.

Boys of the upper classes must, under the circumstances of the day, receive an English education. Without this, they cannot gain a livelihood, and it is idle to kick against facts we cannot change. We can take the English education, then, for granted. But a reform in the books they study is necessary, and efforts should be made to substitute a detailed knowledge of Indian history and geography for the excessive amount of foreign

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history and geography now learned. A sound and broad knowledge of universal history widens the mind and is necessary for culture, but every man should know in fuller detail the history of his own nation, as such knowledge not only conduces to patriotism but also enables a sound judgment to be formed as to the suitability of proposed changes to the national genius. Again, no book should be admitted to the school curriculum that treats the Hindû religion and gods with the contempt born of ignorance. Hindû fathers have permitted their sons to be taught English from a book which states that "Srî Krishna was a profligate and a libertine." Such a sentence is an outrage, and poisons the minds of the boys reading it. The books used should be classical English works, read as literature, or elementary books of a purely secular character, or, still better, prepared by Hindûs thoroughly conversant with English and imbued with reverence for religion. Stories from the *Mahâbhârata* and the *Râmâyana*, well translated, should form reading books both in English and in the vernacular. In science teaching, vigilance must be exerted to shut out any of the demoralising ways in which some branches of science are taught in Europe: no experiments on living animals

should be permitted; they brutalise the heart and generally mislead the intellect. Reverence for life, compassion and tenderness to all sentient creatures, should be inculcated in the school by precept and example.

Moral education should form part of the curriculum. Daily, in every class, a brief portion of some sacred book should be read and explained, and its moral lessons enforced by illustrations; their bearing on individual, family, social and national life should be shown, and the evil results of their opposed vices should be expounded. Occasion should be taken, with the elder youths, to explain the scientific basis—the basis in nature—on which moral precepts are founded, and to point out the wisdom of Hindû religious practices. They will thus acquire an intelligent appreciation of the value of religion and morality.

Sanskrit should be a compulsory subject in every school, as Latin is in European schools. It is the mother of many Indian vernaculars and of Pâli; all the greatest treasures of Indian literature are enshrined in it, and a knowledge of it should be a necessary part of the education of every Indian gentleman. Such a knowledge would also serve as a national bond, for a common

language is one of the strongest elements in nationality. It is grotesque that English should be made the common language of educated Indians, instead of their own rich, flexible and musical Sanskrit. But it must be taught in the modern way, so that a competent knowledge of it, sufficient for reading and conversation, may be acquired in the short time available for learning it. The fashion in which it was taught in more leisurely ages is not suitable to the needs of the time, and even if it be still used for the training of specialists, it can never be adopted as part of the curriculum in modern education. To insist on only teaching it in the old way is to doom Sanskrit to extinction as a living language universally known by educated Indians.

It is, further, exceedingly important that English should be introduced into the Sanskrit schools in which *Pandits* are trained. For the growing gulf between the English-educated Indians, who know no Sanskrit, and the *Pandits*, who know no English, is a danger alike to religious and to national life. These two classes understand each other and sympathise with each other less and less, and the legitimate influence which religious men should wield over worldly men is an ever-

diminishing factor in the national life of India. These classes must be drawn nearer together, and this object will largely be gained by all educated men knowing Sanskrit, and all *Pandits*—the Sanskrit specialists—knowing English, and being a little more in touch with Western thought. A course of Western philosophy should form part of the *Pandit's* education, and it would make him all the better able to appreciate and defend the unrivalled philosophic systems in his own literature. Indian thought has influenced the thought of the world, and the effects of this influence should be known and appreciated by those who are its natural custodians. Men, to influence the world, must be in touch with it, and the *Pandits* are, with each generation, becoming less in touch with it, and more and more isolated from their educated countrymen.

The difficulty of making Sanskrit part of the necessary education of every gentleman is much overrated. Every Muhammadan gentleman knows Arabic, and can read the Koran; why should the Hindû be more backward, in reading the Vedas? To be ignorant of the language in which all his religious ceremonies are performed is to be doomed to irreligion or to unintelligent re-

ligion, and such ignorance should be regarded as disgraceful to a man claiming to be educated.

The spread of Sanskrit knowledge would increase the printing and publishing of Sanskrit works, and open up honourable occupation as Sanskrit teachers to large numbers of *Pandits*—if they would consent to teach in a modern way—and thus many collateral benefits would accrue to India by this addition to the regular school curriculum.

Hindû boarding-houses should be established wherever there are school and college students who come from a distance, and these should be conducted on religious lines; the boys being taught to observe their religious duties and living in the atmosphere of a religious Hindû home. Here again Muhammadans are ahead of us in their care for the religious training of the young, for such Muhammadan boarding-houses are found near colleges attended by Muhammadan students, whereas Hindû boys are ruthlessly exposed to purely secular or even proselytising influences at the very time when they are most impressible. Are there no wealthy Hindûs who care enough for their faith and their country to help in this protection and training of the young?

Let us turn to the education of girls; the future wives and mothers of Hindûs, those on whom the welfare of the family, and therefore largely the welfare of the nation, depends. Until the last two or three generations the education of Hindû girls was by no means neglected. They were trained in religious knowledge, and were familiar with the great Indian epics and with much of the Purânas, to say nothing of the vernacular religious literature. They would learn by heart thousands of lines of these, and would also have stored in their memory many stotras. Hence their children were cradled in an atmosphere full of devotion, fed on sacred songs and stories. Further, they were thoroughly trained in household economy, in the management of the house and the knowledge of the duties of dependents and servants. They were skilled in medicine, and were the family doctors, and many were highly skilled in artistic needle-work and in music. Their education was directed to make them fitted to discharge their functions in life, to render them competent to fulfil the weighty duties belonging to them in Indian family life. "This old-fashioned education" has now almost disappeared, and the present generation are for the most part singularly

incompetent and helpless, too often trivial and childish, unable to train their sons and daughters in the noble simplicity and dignity of true Hindû life.

To remedy this admitted deterioration, attempts are being made to introduce "female education," but unhappily the kind of education mostly essayed, being founded on the needs of Western life, is mischievous rather than beneficial to Indian womanhood. To introduce a system suited to one country into a country where the social conditions are entirely different is to act blindly and foolishly, without any consideration of the objects education is intended to subserve. Education should fit the person educated for the functions he or she is to discharge in later life; if it fails to do this, it may be book-learning but it is not education.

Now the higher education of women in England and America is mainly directed to fitting women to compete with men as bread-winners in the various professions and government employments. Very large numbers of women of gentle birth are compelled, by the present condition of English and American society, to go out into the world to earn their own living. Owing to many causes—among them, the tendency of young Englishmen to

go abroad as colonists and settlers ; the prevalence of widow-marriage, so that one woman may have two or three husbands in succession ; the greater mortality among males—there is a large surplus of unmarried women. When a man marries, he leaves the family home, and makes a new home for his wife and himself ; hence, when the parents die, the unmarried daughters are then homeless in the world, and have to go out to earn a living. Under these circumstances, having to compete with highly educated men, they require an education similar in kind to that hitherto restricted to men ; otherwise they would compete at a hopeless disadvantage and would receive very poor salaries. Women are now educated at high schools and colleges on the same lines as men, and compete with them in examinations, as they do later in working life. They become doctors, professors, clerks, and in America they also practise at the bar and are ordained as ministers of religion.

Needless to say that in India there is no prospect of such a complete revolution in social life, as would break up the family system, drive the women out into the world to earn their bread, make them competitors with men in every walk of life. The province

of women in India is still the home; such a thing as an unmarried girl is scarcely known, and the joint-family system offers a secure shelter to every girl and woman of the family. Their life is a family life; of what avail, then, to waste the years during which they should be educated to play their part well in the family, in giving them an education suited for Western social life but entirely unsuited to their own? The school-life of the girl in India must necessarily be brief, and it is therefore the more important that she should spend that brief time to the best possible advantage. Of what possible value can it be to her to know all about the Wars of the Roses and the dates of great English battles? How much is she the better for learning Latin? Of what value to her is it to pass the Matriculation Examination? Why should ordinary Indian girls have a detailed knowledge of English geography, while ordinary English girls are never taught details of Indian geography—for the very sufficient reason that it would not be of any use to them. The Indian girl should learn to read and write her vernacular, and the books used should for the most part be translations from the most attractive Sanskrit books, the great epics and dramas of her country. The course

of reading mapped out should give her an elementary acquaintance with the Indian literature, history and geography serving as a basis for future study. It might also, in the higher classes, include the broad outlines of universal history and geography, and of the greatest literary masterpieces of foreign nations. She should be given a sound knowledge of arithmetic so continually needed by the manager of a household. She should be taught thoroughly the "science of common life," the value of food-stuffs, the necessary constituents of a healthy diet, the laws of health for the body and the house; she should be thoroughly instructed in medicinal botany, the preparation and use of herbs, the treatment of all simple forms of disease and of simple surgical cases, and of accidents of various kinds. In the higher classes, Sanskrit should be taught, so that the vast stores of the noble literature of India should be opened to her daughters. A knowledge of music, including playing on the vînâ and singing, is most desirable, as well as a thorough acquaintance with such needle-work as is wanted in the home; the teaching of artistic needle-work is also useful as forming a pleasant recreation. At present, in some schools, the hideous "samplers," long since

discarded in English school-teaching, with their crude colours and impossible animals, are being produced. The exquisite Indian embroidery should, of course, take the place of these, with its delicately shaded gradations of colour and its graceful forms. These train the eye and the taste which are demoralised by the other kind of work. But above all else must the Indian girl be trained in the devotion and piety to which her nature so readily responds. Not only should be read, but she should learn by heart, stories and poems from the best Indian literature, stotras and sacred verses. No girl should leave school without becoming familiar with the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* and knowing much, if not all of it, by heart. All the great heroines of Indian story should be made familiar to her, with their inspiring example and elevating influence. The Indian ideal of womanhood should be made living to her in these heroic figures, and she should be taught to regard them as her exemplars in her own life. With heart thus trained and memory thus stored, she will be fit to be "the Lakshmi of the house," and the hearts of husband and children will safely trust in her. Girls thus educated will make the Indian home what it ought to be—the centre of

spirituality, the strength of the national religious life. Among them, we may hope to see revived the glories of the past, the tenderness and fidelity of Sita and Savitri, the intellectual grandeur of Gârgi, the all-sacrificing spirituality of Maitreyê.

If the Indian youth could be educated on these or similar lines, India's future among the nations would be secured, a future not unworthy of her past—spiritually, morally, intellectually and materially great.

The Education of Indian Girls

A Pamphlet issued in 1904

ONE of the first things done by Countess Wachtmeister and myself, when we came to India in 1893, was to concern ourselves with the question of the education of girls. But many thoughtful Indians begged us to wait until we had secured the confidence of the Hindû community, so that no suspicion could arise with regard to our objects. The unhappy perversion of an Indian lady had shaken the confidence of the Hindû public with respect to girls' education, and they feared Christian proselytising under the garb of interest in education. The advice seemed sound, and we accepted it.

Ten years have passed since then, and we may truly say that the confidence of the Hindû public in the purity of our aims and the straightforwardness of our actions has been won. The appeals to me to take up the education of girls have been many and urgent, and unqualified approval of the scheme

I have submitted in writing and speech has been expressed. It seems time, therefore, to give this scheme a wider publicity, and, if it be acceptable, as it seems to be, to a large number of Hindûs, then to let it serve as the basis of a national movement for the education of girls. It is already being followed in a few small girls' schools, carried on by Lodges of the Theosophical Society, and may henceforth take a fuller shape.

The national movement for girls' education must be on national lines: it must accept the general Hindû conceptions of woman's place in the national life, not the dwarfed modern view but the ancient ideal. It must see in the woman the mother and the wife, or, as in some cases, the learned and pious ascetic, the Brahmavâdini of older days. It cannot see in her the rival and competitor of man in all forms of outside and public employment, as woman, under different economic conditions, is coming to be, more and more, in the West. The West must work out in its own way the artificial problem which has been created there as to the relation of the sexes. The East has not to face that problem, and the lines of Western female education are not suitable for the education of Eastern girls. There may be exceptional cases, and

when parents wish their daughters to follow the same course of education as their sons, they can readily secure for them that which they desire. But the *national* movement for the education of girls must be one which meets the national needs, and India needs nobly trained wives and mothers, wise and tender rulers of the household, educated teachers of the young, helpful counsellors of their husbands, skilled nurses of the sick, rather than girl graduates, educated for the learned professions.

Let us, then, put down in order the essentials of the education which is desirable for Indian girls.

1. *Religious and moral education.* Every girl must be taught the fundamental doctrines of her religion, in a clear, simple and rational method. The Sanâtana Dharma Series I. and II., in the vernaculars, will suit Hindû girls as well as Hindû boys, and girls thoroughly grounded in these will be able to study the Advanced Text Book after leaving school, as they are not likely to remain there to an age fit for such study. The *Mahâbhârata* and the *Râmâyana*, in the vernaculars, should be largely drawn on for moral instruction, as well as *Manusmṛiti*; and Tulsi Dâs' *Râmâyana* should be read

by all Hindi-knowing girls. To this should be added the teaching of hymns in the vernacular and stotras in Sanskrit, as well as the committal to memory of many beautiful passages from the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*, the *Hamsa Gîtâ*, the *Anugîtâ*, and other suitable works. They should be taught to worship, and simple plain explanations of the worship followed should be given, and, while the devotion so natural to an Indian woman should be cultured, an intelligent understanding should be added to it, and a pure and enlightened faith, their natural heritage, should be encouraged in them. Where any girl shows capacity for deeper thought, philosophical studies and explanations should not be withheld from her, so that opportunity may be afforded for the re-appearance of the type of which Maitreyê and Gârgi and the women singers of the Vedas were shining examples. Girls belonging to the Islâmic and Zoroastrian faiths should be similarly instructed, the books of their respective religions taking the place of the Hindû works named above. There is an abundant wealth of beautiful devotional verse in Persian, to culture and elevate the mind of the Muslim girl, to whom also should be opened the stores of Arabic learning. The Zoroas-

trian has also ample sacred treasures for the instruction of his girls, and can utilise selections from the Avesta, Pahlavi and Persian. I do not know if there is much available vernacular literature in these faiths in Southern India, but in Northern India Urdu literature for the girls of Islâm is not lacking.

2. *Literary Education*. A sound literary knowledge of the vernacular should be given, both in reading and writing. Vernacular literature, in Hindi, Urdu, Bengâli, Marâthi, Gujerâti, Telugu, and Tamil, is sufficiently rich in original works and translations to give full scope for study, and to offer a store of enjoyment for the leisure hours of later life. A colloquial knowledge of some vernacular other than her own would be useful to a girl, if time would allow of the learning. A classical language, Sanskrit or Arabic or Persian, according to the girl's religion, should be learned sufficiently to read with pleasure the noble literature contained therein, and the quick Indian girl will readily master sufficient of one of these tongues to prove a never-failing delight to her in her womanhood, and to listen with intelligent pleasure to the reading of her husband as he enjoys the masterpieces of the great writers.

Indian history and Indian geography should be thoroughly taught, and reading-books should be provided consisting of stories of all the sweetest and strongest women in Indian story, so that the girls may feel inspired by these noblest types of womanhood as compelling ideals, and may have before them these glorious proofs of the heights to which Indian women have climbed. The very narrowness of their present lives, their triviality and frivolity, render the more necessary the presentation to them of a broad and splendid type as a model for their uplifting, and their minds will be thus widened and their ideas enlarged, at the same time that they will be led along lines purely national and in consonance with immemorial ideals. If the Westernising, in a bad sense, of Indian men be undesirable, still more undesirable is such Westernising of Indian women; the world cannot afford to lose the pure, lofty, tender and yet strong type of Indian womanhood. It is desirable, also, seeing how much English thought is dominating the minds of the men, and how many sympathetic Englishwomen seek to know their Indian sisters, that the girls should learn English, and have thus opened to them the world of thought outside India; in later

life they may make many a pleasant excursion into that world in the company of their husbands, and the larger horizons will interest without injuring.

3. *Scientific Education.* Nothing is more necessary to the Indian wife and mother, ruler often of a household that is a little village, than a knowledge of sanitary laws, of the value of foodstuffs, of nursing the sick, of simple medicines, of "first aid" in accidents, of cookery of the more delicate kind, of household management, and the keeping of accounts. The hygiene of the household should be thoroughly taught, the value of fresh air, sunlight, and scrupulous cleanliness; these were, indeed, thoroughly understood and practised by the elder generation, and must still, if learned in the schoolroom, find their field of practice in the home; but the latest generation seems to be in all this far behind its grandmothers. Essential again is a knowledge of the value of foodstuffs, and of their effects on the body in the building of muscular, nervous and fatty tissues, of their stimulative or nutrient qualities. Some knowledge of simple medicines is needed by every mother, that she may not be incessantly calling in a doctor; she should also be able to deal with accidental

injuries, completely with slight ones, and sufficiently with serious ones to prevent loss of life while awaiting the surgeon's coming; simple nursing every girl should learn, and the importance of accuracy in observing directions, keeping fixed hours for food and medicine, etc. Sufficient arithmetic should be learned for all household purposes, for quick and accurate calculation of quantities and prices, and the keeping of accounts. A knowledge of cookery has always been part of the education of the Indian housewife, and this should still have its place in education, or there will be little comfort in the house for husband and children. The Indian cook —like cooks in other countries—does his work all the better if the house-mother is able to supervise and correct.

4. *Artistic Education.* Instruction in some art should form part of education for a girl, so that leisure in later life may be pleasantly and adequately filled, instead of being wasted in gossip and frivolity. South India is leading the way in musical education, and the prejudice against it is disappearing. The singing of stotras, to an accompaniment on the vînâ, or other instrument, is a refining and delightful art in which the girls take the greatest pleasure, and one which enables them

to add greatly to the charm of home. Drawing and painting are arts in which some find delight, and their deft fingers readily learn exquisite artistic embroidery and needle-work of all kinds. Needless to say that all should learn sewing, darning and the cutting out of such made garments as are used in their district. In all of these, the natural taste of the pupil should be the guide to the selection of the art, though almost all, probably, will take part in singing.

5. *Physical Education.* The training and strengthening of the bodies of the future mothers must not be left out of sight, and, to this end, physical exercises of a suitable kind should form part of the school curriculum. In Southern India, the girls are very fond of exercises in which they move to the sound of their own songs, performing often complicated exercises, in some of which patterns are woven and unwoven in coloured threads attached to a centre high overhead, the ends of the threads being held by the girls, whose evolutions make and unmake the pattern. Other exercises somewhat resemble the well-known "Swedish exercises," and all these are good, and there are games which give exercise of a pleasant and active kind. These conduce to the health of the

young bodies, and give grace of movement, removing all awkwardness. Nothing is prettier than to see a group of girls moving gracefully to the sound of their own young voices, in and out, in mazy evolutions, with clapping of soft palms or clash of light playing-sticks. The lack of physical exercise leads to many chronic ailments in womanhood and to premature old age.

Such is an outline of the education which would, it seems to me, prove adequate to the needs of the young daughters of India, and would train them up into useful and cultured women, heads of happy households, "lights of the home."

There will always be some exceptional girls who need for the due evolution of their faculties a more profound and a wider education, and these must be helped to what they need as individuals, each on her own line. Such girls may be born into India in order to restore to her the learned women of the past, and to place again in her diadem the long-lost pearl of lofty female intelligence. It is not for any to thwart them in their upward climbing, or to place unnecessary obstacles in their path.

Of this we may be sure, that Indian greatness will not return until Indian womanhood

obtains a larger, a freer, and a fuller life, for largely in the hands of Indian women must lie the redemption of India. The wife inspires or retards the husband; the mother makes or mars the child. The power of woman to uplift or debase man is practically unlimited, and man and woman must walk forward hand in hand to the raising of India, else will she never be raised at all. The battle for the religious and moral education of boys is won, although the victory has still to be made effective all over India. The battle for the education of girls is just beginning, and may Ishvara bless those who are the vanguard, and all beneficent Powers enlighten their minds and make strong their hearts.



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